

The Path to Liberty:
OR, THE
M E T H O D
O F
M A N ' S R E D E M P T I O N
B Y O U R
Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
In Two P A R T S.
Together with
C H R I S T I A N L I B E R T Y.

B Y
T H O M A S R A W B O N E, A. M. late
Rector of *Norton-Under-Hamden* in
Somersetshire.

With a Recomendatory P R E F A C E by
Dr. *EDWARDS*, Principal of *Jesus College*,
OXON.

L O N D O N:
Printed for *W. Taylor*, at the Ship in *Pater-Noster-*
Rom, 1711.



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T H E
P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

TH E S E following Papers having been put into my Hands by a Relation of the Authors, with his desire that I would both Peruse, and give my Judgment of them; I did accordingly Read them over, and thought they might be of very good use for the Instruction of the Reader, in several very useful and important Doctrines of Religion. The Author shews himself to be a Man of good Learning, and sound Judgment, Orthodox in the Faith, and very able, as well as willing, to explain and defend it.

Here he will find the great Articles of the Christian Faith, concerning the *Divinity* and *Incarnation* of the Son of God and the *Redemption* of Mankind by
A the

The *P R E F A C E*

the Death and Sufferings of our Saviour founded in the Sin and Fall of our first Parent *A D A M*, who thereby brought Himself, into Misery and involv'd likewise all his Posterity in the Guilt and Punishment of his Transgression, rightly stated and maintain'd, against the Impious Tenets of Antient Hereticks; and now lately Revived, and with great boldness, Publish'd by some Modern Writers.

But he does not rest here, but after having Asserted the necessity of our Redemption by Christ, and shew'd the blessed Advantages that arise from thence, consisting principally in our Deliverance and Freedom from the Curse and Malediction of the Law; to which *A D A M* first, and his Posterity afterwards, by Reason of his Disobedience, were Obnoxious; he comes to obviate the Mistakes, and rectifie the ill Inferences that some Men have, and do still draw from this Doctrine.

'Tis no new thing for Men to abuse the Grace of God and their own Christian Liberty, to very Ill and Dangerous Purposes. This many did in the Days of the Apostles themselves, who turn'd the *Grace of God* into Wantonness, and made their *Christian Liberty*, a
Cloak

Cloak for Maliciousness; thereby endeavouring at the same time, not only to conceal, but also to adorn their Wicked purposes and designs.

Nothing has given greater Advantages to the great Corrupters of our Faith, and the Enemies of our Religion, I mean the *Socinians*, and their Friends and Followers, and encouraged them in their Opposition to the Great Doctrine of our Religion, *i. e.* the *Satisfaction* of our Saviour, and the *Redemption* purchased by the Merits of his Death and Sufferings, than the wrong Notions some have entertain'd of the Nature and Design of that Redemption; as if thereby, they were delivered not only from that *Penalty*, but likewise from the necessity of yielding *Obedience* to the *L A W*; as if because *C H R I S T* had satisfied the Justice, and pacified the Wrath of *G O D*, and thereby Reconcil'd him to Mankind, they were now at Liberty to live as they pleas'd, without any Obligation to the Practice of their Duty, or fear of Punishment for the neglect of it. An Execrable abuse this of the Grace and Mercy of *G O D*, making that which he design'd to be the most effectual means to deter, and thereby to withdraw us from the
Com-

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Commission of Sin, an Encouragement to the Practice of it; What is this but to turn the *Antidote* it self into *Poison*, and make that which was the great Means of procuring the Salvation of Men, the Instrument of their Ruine? for that must be the Consequence of that Wretched Notion, where Men are govern'd by it: For they who go on in a Course of Sin and Impenitence because GRACE has abounded, their Damnation will be Certain and Unavoidable, as it must be acknowledged to be Just and Righteous.

The Author of this Discourse lived long in that Place, and among those Persons where the *Anti-Nomian* Notions too much prevail'd, concerning the *Absolute Promises* of Pardon, and an *Unconditional Covenant* of GRACE, *i. e.* as he rightly observes of a Covenant, which is indeed no Covenant but a meer *Promise* of Blessings from GOD, without any demand of Duty or Obedience from Man; as if GOD alone were bound, and they at Liberty, being under no Obligation to perform any thing in Order to attain a Title to Life and Happiness, this oblig'd him in the Course of his Ministry

nistry to oppose and confute these Pernicious Errors, by Reason of which, the way of TRUTH has been Evil spoken of; this he thought he could not more effectually do, than by shewing that they did undermine the very foundation of this Merciful Dispensation, and frustrated, as far as it is in the Power of Error, the principal end of CHRIST's coming into the World, who died indeed to deliver us from his Father's WRATH, but first from our Sins which deserved it; who gave himself for us, that he might Redeem Us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a *Peculiar People Zealous of Good Works*; This was the great design of all that our Saviour did and Suffer'd, of his Doctrine, and his Miracles, of his Life, and his Death, of his Resurrection and Ascension into HEAVEN, and the Mission of the HOLY GHOST; whose great Office it is to Sanctifie and *cleanse his Church, that it may not have spot or wrinkle or any such Thing, but that it may be Holy and without Blemish.*

I shall detain the Reader no longer, but refer him to the Work it self, where he will find these things very Judiciously stated, and the necessity
of

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of a Holy Life, enforced with all the Arguments that may be proper to convince the Understanding or move the Affections; which that they may have their due effect, in order to produce that Reformation of Manners, that is so much talk'd of, and so little practised, is the Hearty Prayer of,

L O N D O N :

March 16, 1710.

J. Edwards.

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Christian

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P A R T. I.

IT is allow'd by all Christians, that God made *Introducti-*
 Man upright, or righteous, as Righteousness *on.*
 implies a perfect and universal Rectitude, and
 Integrity of Nature, or the undefaced Image of
 God, consisting in perfect Righteousness, and
 true Holiness, as the Apostle defines it; that is, an
 universal Harmony and Compliance with the Will
 of God, the Pattern and Rule of Righteousness; or
 with the original Law of Creation, or Moral Law,
 commonly called the Law of Nature, written in the
 Hearts of all Men: Thus was *Adam* righteous in his
 State of Integrity, before his fall, and so was Christ
 when he took our Nature upon him, and in this
 Sense there's no Man, besides them, righteous, no not
 one; for the least declining from the Rule, the least
 breach of that eternal Law, is enough to denominate
 a Man unrighteous: For as all Unrighteousness is Sin,
 so all Sin is Unrighteousness, and consequently every
 Sinner unrighteous, yea tho' he fail but in one Point,
 as *Adam* did, and thereby render'd himself and all
 his Posterity, obnoxious to the dreadful Penalty of
 this Law. By his Disobedience we became Sinners,
 and therefore absolutely incapable of being justi-
 fied by Law, which required perfect and unfinning

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Obedience : And in this hopeless condition we must have continued for ever, had not Christ taken our Nature upon him, and in that Nature perfectly obeyed the Law, and by his Obedience and cursed Death, made a full Satisfaction for the Sins of the World. Thus far all Christians are agreed ; but some having unhappily deceived themselves, by imagining That since Christ hath made full Satisfaction for our Sins, we may now sin on with impunity ; the Design of these following Treatises, is to endeavour to convince these Men, that although we shall be justified and esteemed righteous in the Sight of God, through the Righteousness and Merits of Christ, and the Attonement he hath made for us, yet we shall not be Partakers of these Blessings, unless we apply them unto our selves, by an Obedience to his Gospel ; the Design of which, is to sanctify and refine our Nature from the Filth and Defilement of Sin, and repair the Image of God upon our Souls, and so to make us capable of enjoying the Happiness which our first Parents forfeited by their Disobedience. I shall begin with shewing what that Penalty of the Law is, to which Man by his Disobedience became obnoxious.

The Penalty of the Law is

By the Penalty of the Law, may be meant both the Threatning it self, and all the Evils or Punishments threatned in it ; for the Penalty may be taken, either for the Commination, or Threatning, with which the Law was established, or for the Miseries threatned in it : For the better understanding whereof, we are to take notice, that what in our common Language we call Penalty, is in the Scripture called the Curse of the Law ; so *Dent. 29. 20, 21. All the Curses of the Covenant that are written in the Book of the Law*, are all the Punishments which God hath threatned against Transgressors ; for tho' amongst Men a Curse signifies no more than an evil Wish, yet the Curse of God is always effectual, more or less, as he seeth fit ; and being annexed to his Law, to awe and restrain Men from transgressing it, gives force and strength, as that which will render the Offenders liable and obnoxious to all the Evils, whether Temporal, Spiritual, or Eternal, that are comprehended

prehended in it. So that by the *Curse*, is meant all the Misery that God hath threatned against Sinners, for their Transgressions of his holy Law, whether in this World, or that which is to come; and it is so usual in the Scripture to call Punishments, inflicted for Sin, the *Curse*, meaning the *Curse* of the Law which threatned them, that I need not recite any particular Texts: The particular Evils included in the general *Curse*, are not indeed always mentioned, for the Law often says in general, *Cursed is he that does thus, or thus*; and *Cursed is he that continueth not in all things*, &c. as you may see *Dent. 27.* *Eternal Death.* from v. 14. to the end, not making particular and expresse mention of the Evils intended by it. But if we consider that it is the *Curse* of God annexed to his holy Law, to make it the more regarded, and to restrain Men from Transgressions, we cannot reasonably doubt, but the Evils included in it are very dreadful, sufficient to deter any rational Man from the Violation of that Law. Fear is the Band of all Laws, without which every one would slight and transgress them at his pleasure; for tho' there is an intrinsecal Evil and Baseness in Sin, which common Reason may easily discern, and which should make us always hate and be careful to avoid it, yet this is not enough, especially in the present degenerate State of Man, to restrain him from it under all the contrary Sollicitations of Carnal Lusts. 'Twas not only just but needful therefore, that God should establish his Laws with the Threatning of a Penalty, which (the Corruption of Man consider'd) might be sufficient in its kind to preserve his Authority from Contempt, and awe them to Obedience. This could not be, unless the Evil threatned in the Law, were greater than any Profit or Pleasure that could entice Men to transgress it: This makes it reasonable to extend the *Curse* beyond this present Life; for sad Experience makes it manifest, that nothing less than eternal Suffering in the World to come, is sufficient to restrain the World from Sin; yea, the fear of these will not prevail with many, who, notwithstanding the clearest Revelations of that dreadful Penalty, do still run headlong into their Sins.

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The PATH to LIBERTY.

But I need not insist on this, for that the Curse or Penalty of the Law contains in it eternal Punishment, is manifest from many Texts of Scripture, in which 'tis so explain'd; and doubtless the Curse of the Law must be of equal latitude with our Redemption from it. So that to question whether the Curse extends to eternal Punishment, is in effect to question, whether our Redemption by Christ from the Curse of the Law, be meant of Redemption from eternal Misery, a Truth which no Christian can reasonably doubt of; since we are so plainly and expressly told, *that Christ hath delivered us from the wrath to come, that he took part of flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, i. e. the devil; and deliver them who thro' fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.* Yea, doubtless it is eternal Death, and Misery that is principally intended in our Redemption from the Curse of the Law, for Christ was not a meer temporal Redeemer, but suffer'd for more glorious ends; and by his death obtain'd eternal Redemption for us.

*Spiritu-
al Punish-
ment.*

Besides eternal Punishment in the life to come, there is also under the Curse of the Law comprehended spiritual Punishment, which chiefly affects the Soul, such as the Loss of God's sanctifying and comforting Spirit, and the sad Consequents of that lamentable Loss; for that these are contain'd in the Curse of the Law, appears from the end of our Redemption from it by the death of Christ, mention'd *Gal. 3. 14.* namely, *that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, and we might receive the promise of the Spirit.* For the promise of the Spirit, or the Spirit promised in the Gospel being one end of our Redemption by Christ from the Curse of the Law, most plainly shews, that the loss of the quickening and comforting influence of that holy Spirit, was one great part of the Curse. This also appears from the Execution of the Curse laid on Man for the first Sin; for when Man had sinned, God took his holy Spirit from him; whence ensued a great Disorder in all his Faculties, Blindness in his Understanding, Perverseness in his Will, and the Rebellion of the sensitive Appetite, and Affections against the rational Powers of the Soul, which hereby lost that
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love and relish of heavenly things with which it was at first created. And from this loss of the Spirit of God, which was part of the Punishment inflicted for the first Sin, ariseth the necessity of Regeneration, or being born again of the Spirit before we can enter into the Kingdom of God. And certainly as the restoring the Influence of God's quickening Spirit is an inestimable Blessing, so the loss of them ever was, and still is a most heavy and dreadful Curse to any one that reflects upon the spiritual Evils we are subject to; for to be deprived of the holy Spirit, as a Principle of Holiness and Comfort, and to become a Slave and Captive to Sin and Satan, to carry about him a depraved Nature, full of Enmity against God, the Fountain of all true Happiness, to be a Child of Wrath, prone to Evil, and averse to all that is truly good; to delight in Sin, and withal to carry in his Breast an accusing Conscience, tormenting him with Horror, and fearful Expectations of future Judgment, is a degree of Wretchedness, and Misery, far beyond all temporal Calamities which can happen in this present World.

Under the Curse of the Law are likewise comprehended all temporal Penalties or Punishments whatsoever; whether privative or positive, of Loss or of Sense; private on particular Persons, or publick on whole Nations, or Communities of Men; and these temporal Penalties are so various and many, that it is not easy to enumerate the Particulars of them; some of them you may see expressly mention'd in the Explication of the Curse, *Deut. 28.* from the 15th to the end. *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his Commandments and his Statutes which I command thee this day, that all the Curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.* Some of which are expressly mention'd in the following Verses. *Cursed shalt thou be in the City, and cursed shalt thou be in the Field. Cursed shall be thy Basket and thy Store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou*

*Tempo-
ral Evils.*

settest thy hand unto; until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the Wickedness of thy doings wherewith thou hast forsaken me. It follows farther yet. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, he shall smite the earth with a Consumption, and with a Fever, and with an Inflammation, and with an extream burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and mildew: The heaven that is above thy head shall be as brass, and the earth that is under thee as iron. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them; thy sons and daughters shall go into Captivity. All thy trees and the fruit of thy land shall the locust consume. The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. Now, many of these Curses were really Blessings, and Favours in themselves, had not they been blasted and imbitter'd to them by Crosses, Disappointments, and ill Successes which attend them; according to the Commination of God by his Prophet *Mal. 2. 2.* If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it unto heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a Curse upon you, and will curse your Blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. I instance in these Particulars the rather, because they seem many of them to become upon us, for our National and crying Sins; and we may truly say with the Son of *Neriah*, We have been disobedient to the Lord our God, and we have been negligent in not hearing his voice; wherefore the evils cleaved unto us, and the curse of the Lord appointed by his servant *Moses*, *Baruch 1. 19, 20.* for wherever else we lay the Blame, our Sins are the true Causes of all the Evils and Miseries which we feel or fear. To the Sins of the People, the holy Scriptures constantly ascribe all the Curses and Calamities that beset them. All *Israel* have transgressed thy law even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice, therefore the curse is poured out upon us. Therefore *Jacob* was given to the curse, and *Israel* to reproach, as *Isa. 43. 28.* But that which aggravates Man's Misery, which he is fallen into by Sin, is that besides all the Calamities from without, he carries Mortality and

Misery

Misery in his Nature, and is moreover liable to endless Sufferings in the World to come.

Having said so much of the Penalty of the Law in general, it may be thought needless to prove that temporal Death was intended in that original Commi-^{Temporal} nation of the positive Law deliver'd to Man in Pa-^{Death,} radise, *thou shalt surely die*; but for farther Satisfaction I shall make this appear.

First, From the primary, and most proper Signification of the Word, whereby the Penalty is expressed.

Secondly, From the following Sentence, and the Execution of it on the generality of all Mankind.

Thirdly, From the Sacrifice, or Death of Christ, requir'd for our Redemption from it.

Fourthly, From the end of his Undertaking, which was to deliver us from all our Enemies; the last whereof is Death.

All and each of which will make it manifest, that temporal Death was part of the Penalty intended in that Threatning, *thou shalt surely die*.

First, This is the most genuine and proper signification of the Word; for tho' as Life in Scripture signifies Happiness in general, not determining it to any one particular kind, so on the other side, Death likewise often signifies Misery in general; even all that is hurtful to Man, and tends to make him wretched and miserable in Body and Soul. Yet this is but a Metaphorical and figurative signification of the Word *Death*, which most commonly and properly denotes the separation of Soul and Body at the end of this mortal Life. When God therefore first threatned Death as a Penalty to be inflicted for the Violation of his Law, we cannot reasonably imagin, but that this kind of Death, which is the most proper Signification of the Word, was particularly intended, tho' not so as to exclude any other Misery consequent upon the first Sin, much less those future Miseries sometimes called the second Death.

Secondly, That Temporal Death was particularly meant in the Curse or Threatning of the Law given to Man in Paradise, farther appears from the following Sentence against him, and the Execution of it

after he had sinned; for when Man had transgressed the Law, God summoned him to Judgment, and not only passed Sentence against him, but executed it too according to the Threatning of his Law. For tho' at passing the Sentence in Paradise, there was a Promise made of Christ, for whose sake the severest part of the Penalty, *i. e.* the suffering of eternal Death, was conditionally remitted, and therefore not mentioned in the Sentence, yet temporal Death is plainly enough expressed in these Words, *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return*, Gen. 3. 19. This therefore was part of the Penalty contained in the former Threatning, *In the day that thou eatest of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt surely die*, or in dying thou shalt die; for surely the Sentence did not contain more than the Threatning, tho', for the Reason given but now, it contained much less, and Man was not unavoidably condemned to eternal Death: I shall only add, that as temporal Death, contained in the Sentence passed upon *Adam* after his Sin, was certainly included in the Threatning declared before-hand, to deterr him from it, so in execution of that Threat and Sentence, the same Death is unavoidably entailed on the whole Race of Sinners descending from him, who partaking of their Father's Sin, are involved in his Punishment; accordingly we read, *That in Adam all die*, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *i. e.* were concluded in the Sentence pronounced against him in Paradise, and so adjudged to a certainty of temporal Death, which consequently must be executed even upon Believers themselves, notwithstanding their Redemption from the Curse of the Law by Christ: Neither is their actual, perfect and compleat Deliverance to be expected, till the general Resurrection at the last Day, when in Christ they shall again be made alive, as it there follows.

Thirdly, That temporal Death was particularly intended in the Threatning annexed to this Law, appears by the Death of Christ, required for our Redemption; for as the Apostle argues, *If one dyed for all, then were all dead*; that is in some respect dead already, and in others liable and obnoxious unto death, 2 Cor. 5. 14. Which Words, tho' they are

prima-

primarily meant of an higher kind of Death than this we are now speaking of, are true also of this. *For since the Redeemer became obedient unto death, Phil. 2. 8. Since it was by the means of death that he redeemed the transgressors of the first Covenant, Heb. 9. 15.* we may reasonably infer, that the same kind of Death was due unto them for their Transgressions of it. Neither are these Words to be restrained to the Mosaical Law, in its carnal and political Sense, as delivered only to the Seed of *Israel*, exclusively of the former delivered unto *Adam*. For as Death reigned from *Adam* unto *Moses*, *Rom. 5.* so (as shall hereafter be more fully shewn) Christ is a perfect Redeemer, and the Vertue of his Death extended to the Faithful in all Ages of the World, long before the Law was given out of *Sinai*; He is that *Seed of the Woman* which was promised in *Paradise* to brise the Serpents Head, *Gen. 3. 15.* and who from the beginning undertook to become Man, *That by death he might destroy him that had the power of death, i. e. the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject unto bondage, Heb. 2. 14.* Which Words are likewise to be extended unto Death, as entring into the World by the first Sin, and passing upon all Men that lived before the Mosaical Law was given; for both *Adam* himself, and his Posterity before *Moses*, were subject unto bondage by fear of death; the Guilt whereof was contracted by the Fall, and from this Fear we are delivered by Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, *2 Tim. 1. 10.* giving us assured Hopes of a Resurrection of our Bodies from the Grave, *1 Cor. 15. 20. &c.*

Fourthly, That temporal Death was particularly meant in the original Threatning, declared in *Paradise*, appears also from the Design, and End of our Redeemer's undertaking the Work of Man's Redemption, which was to deliver us from all our spiritual Enemies, and restore us to perfect Bliss and Happiness. For the Enemies from which he came to deliver us, were the Evils brought upon Mankind by the Fall, in execution of the former Threatning, and the last of those Enemies is Death, over which God hath promised

mised a Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,
1 Cor. 15. 5.

The Reason why I insist so much on this, is, the more plainly to let you see the Necessity of distinguishing between Christ's Purchase of our Redemption, by the Payment of a Ransome, or Price for our Deliverance, and our Deliverance its self, which was purchased thereby; or between the Payment of the Ransome, and our Enjoyment of the Fruits and Benefits of it: For tho' Christ, in the first respect, hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, *i. e.* tho' he hath given himself a Ransome for all, and obtained eternal Redemption for us; yet all the Effects, Fruits, and Benefits of our Redemption, obtained by his Death, are not conferred presently, and at once, but by degrees, in God's own way, time and order, and upon what Terms and Conditions he saw fit to appoint. For some he bestoweth absolutely, some conditionally, some before, and some after our Conversion to him, some presently upon Conversion, some not till Death, and others not before the Resurrection. This will be manifest from a little Consideration of the Curse, in its full extent and latitude: For all the temporal Evils which Men suffer in this World as the Punishment of Sin, being parts of the Curse, or Penalty, which God threatned in his Law against Transgressors, common Experience, even of Believers themselves, may convince them, that their Deliverance is not yet compleat and perfect, but that they do, and must for a time, unavoidably lie under some parts of the Curse, denounced in the Law, and brought upon the World by Sin: For tho' Christ be a perfect Saviour, and will at last perfectly deliver all his Members, not only from all the Penalties incurred by Sin, but from Sin it self also, which was the Cause of all; yet Experience, as well as Scripture testifies, that their Deliverance is not as yet compleated, but that they are subject both to Sin, and Punishment, as long as they live in this present World. The Remainders of original Corruption, Mortality, Sicknefs, Death, and Rottenness in the Grave, besides many other temporal Calamities, to which all are subject, are Instances beyond Excep-

tion to prove, that some of the Evils contained in the Curse of the Law, and brought on the World by Sin, shall not be wholly removed till Death, and others not till the Resurrection of the Body out of the Grave, when the last Enemy Death it self shall be destroyed, and swallowed up in Victory. This I take notice of here, on purpose that you may apprehend the Consistency of those Conditions required of us in the Gospel, with our Redeemer's Sufferings and Satisfaction for our Sins.

Thus had we forfeited all the Rights of our Creation, and were become obnoxious to all the Curses that are written in the Book of the Law; yet God did not leave us, as he did the fallen Angels, without Help, or Remedy, but sent his Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins, 1 John 4. 10, &c.

He foresaw that Man would fall into Misery, and his wonderful Love caused him to contrive a way to redeem him from it; whereupon it was resolved by the whole TRINITY, that the Second Person should assume our Nature, therein to suffer, and how far, and to what Intents and Purposes his Sufferings should be available. For 'twas in his Choice whether he would suffer, and in his Father's whether he would accept his Sufferings, in order to our Redemption: So that there was an eternal Compact, and mutual Agreement, between him and his Father; in which it was concluded, what he should suffer, and what he should receive. Hence it is, that besides the Covenant made with Man, which was confirmed by the Blood of Christ, there's no Orthodox Divine but will acknowledge another Covenant from Eternity, between the Father and the Son, tho' they differ much in the manner of it. To wave their disagreement, it is I think by all granted, that there was such a Covenant, and it is evident by those many Promises in the Scripture, which are as it were the Transcripts of it, and all grounded on the Satisfaction of Christ: But there are two Texts which more directly describe it unto us; the first is, *Isaiah 53. 10, 11.* where the Father propounds to the Son, *If he shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his Seed, he shall justify many, he shall bear their iniquities.*

Our Redeemer is Jesh. Christ, the second Person of the Trinity.

Between whom and his Father there was an eternal Compact.

And

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And to this Proposal or Offer of the Father, the Son answers and accepts it; *Heb. 10. 7. Lo I come to do thy will, O God (in the volume of the book it is written of me.)* Which two make up a perfect Covenant; the Father offers the Son *That he should see of the travail of his soul, i. e. should redeem miserable Man, upon Condition that he would make his Soul an Offering for Sin, or, what is the same, if he would suffer for him:* The Son accepts this Condition, *Lo I come to do thy will, O God;* that is, to perform whatever his Father required of him, in order to the great Work of our Redemption, even to suffer and be obedient to the Death of the Cross. That this is the Meaning of those Words, will appear, if ye consider, that the *Volume of the Book* is by an Hebraism used for a Contract, or Indenture, in reference to the Custom of the *Jews*, who were used to write them in Volumes, or long Rolls, to be folded up for the Preservation of them; so here the *Liber convolutus*, the *Volume of the Book*, or Book folded up, is used for a Contract, or Indenture, between God the Father and the Son, and implies an antecedent Agreement, preparatory to the great Work of Christ's Incarnation; wherein he, undertaking perfectly to fulfil the Will of God, to perform all active and passive Obedience, even unto Death, had that Promise from God, *That he should become the Author of Salvation to all that obey him.*

Here it will be necessary to observe, that there are three kinds of Laws, to the Penalty of which Man became liable. 1. The Positive Law, deliver'd to Adam in Paradise. 2. The Mosaical Law. 3. The Law of Nature.

First, I take it for granted, that Christ hath redeemed us from the Penalty of the Positive Law, deliver'd to our first Parents in Paradise, wherein it was said of the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil, *thou shalt not eat, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*, Gen. 2. 17. That Christ hath redeemed us from the Death and Misery brought upon Mankind by the Breach of this Command, is manifest from the Promise of Christ himself, presently after the Fall, long before the Mosaical Law was given,

given, *Gen. 3. 25.* and from many other Texts of Scripture, especially from the Comparison betwixt the first and second *Adam*, in the 5th Chapter to the *Romans*; the Design whereof is to shew, that as the first *Adam* was the Author of Sin and Death, so Christ the second *Adam*, was the Author of Righteousness and Life. Accordingly we elsewhere read, *That since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.* There needs no more fully to demonstrate, that Christ died to redeem us from the Penalty brought on all Mankind by the Sin of our first Parents in Paradise.

Secondly, I may take it for granted also, that he *Secondly*, redeemed the Jews from the Curse of the Mosaical *The Jews* Law, delivered to the Seed of *Israel*; for so we are *from the* expressly told, *Gal. 4. 4, 5.* *When the fulness of the time* *Curse of* *was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman, made the Mosai-* *cal Law, in* *under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, four re-* *that we might receive the adoption of sons.* And he is *spects.* said to have redeemed those that were under the Law of *Moses* in four respects.

I. Because he redeemed them from the Yoke and I. *From* Bondage of the Ceremonial Law, and consequently *the Bon-* from the Curse, and Penalty that once belonged to *dage of the* the Transgressors of it: Hence it is, that the State of *Ceremonial* Christians under the Gospel, is compared to a State *Law.* of Sonship and Freedom; whereas the State of the Jews under that Law, is by the Apostle accounted a State of Servitude and Bondage, *Gal. 4. 6, 7. 24.* to the end of the Chapter. Thus hath Christ redeemed them that were under the Yoke of the Ceremonial Law, not only from the Curse, but also from the Servitude and Obligation of it; so that the Law it self is abrogated, and no longer remains a Law in force to any Christians, either in respect of its Precepts, or Threatnings. Neither was this a Favour peculiar to the Jewish Nation; for tho' the Gentiles were never obliged by the Ceremonial Law, unless they voluntarily became Profelytes unto it, yet the Benefit was not small which accrued to them by the Abrogation of it: For Christ having broken down that middle Wall of Partition between us, that is, having

having by his Death abolished the Enmity, even the Law of Commandments contained in Ceremonial Ordinances, hath in so doing taken away the ancient Distinction between Jews and Gentiles, and reconciled them one to the other, and both to God, and of Two hath made One New Man; *i. e.* of two disagreeing People hath made one Christian Church: So that *the Gentiles, who sometimes were afar off, were made nigh (unto God) by the blood of Christ; they who were once without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, were now admitted into the fellowship and communion of the church of Christ, and made equal with God's ancient people the Jews, Ephes. 2. 12, 13, 14, &c.*

II. From
*the Severi-
ty of the
Judicial
Law.*

II. Christ may be said to have redeemed them that were under the Law of *Moses*, because he redeemed them not only from the Yoke of the Ceremonial, but also from the Severity of the Judicial Law; for by the Judicial Law of the Commonwealth of *Israel*, there were some Sins, such as Idolatry, Adultery, Murder, and others, of a gross and heinous Nature, for which no Sacrifice was allow'd, but the Offender was to die without Mercy, under two or three Witnesses, *Heb. 10. 28.* There were Sacrifices allow'd for other Sins, but they that were guilty of these, were irremediably to be put to death by the Civil Magistrate, the Law admitting no Expiation for them; but in the Gospel of Christ, is no such Rigour, or Severity to be found, Christ having offer'd himself a propitiatory Sacrifice to God. There is no Sinner but may hope for Pardon, and receive it too, if by Faith in Christ he sincerely repenteth of his Folly, and returns unto Obedience; and to this purpose, learned Interpreters expound those Words of *St. Paul*, in his Sermon to the Men of *Israel*, *Acts 13. 38, 39.* *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached to you forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. For tho' there was no true Justification, or Forgiveness of Sins by the Law of Moses; tho' the*
Sacrifici-

Sacrifices offered under the law, could never make the comers thereunto perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, Hebrews 9. 9 and 10. Tho' it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away (the guilt of) sin, Heb. 10. 4. So that the only Expiation that was made by those Legal Sacrifices, was either Civil, or Ritual, relating either to corporal Punishment, or to legal Pollutions; there being a Necessity of a higher Sacrifice to make Expiation from Sin, and purge the Conscience from the Guilt thereof, in the Sight of God: In short, tho' under the Law there was no full and perfect Pardon, but what was owing to a better Covenant established by the Blood of Christ: So that the Words are true in general, that by him all that believe are justified, from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; i. e. are by Christ absolved, and acquitted from the Guilt of Sin in general, which the Law of Moses by all its Ceremonies and Sacrifices could never remove, or put away: Yet when the Apostle preached thus to the Jews, he seems to have had some peculiar Respect to those greater Sins, for which the Jews themselves acknowledged there was no Expiation by Sacrifice allowed in their Law, that he might the more fully set forth the all-sufficient Vertue of the Sacrifice of Christ.

III. Christ may be said to have redeemed them III. *From* that were under the Law, because he delivered *the Mosaic* them from the Mosaic Dispensation of it, *cal Dispen-* which in the Scripture is called the Old Cove-*sation, or* nant, and which was abolished by Christ, by his old Cove-*bringing in a better covenant established upon better* nant. *promises, Heb. 8. 6. compar'd with chap. 7. 18, 19.* And of this disannulling of the Old Covenant, several Texts of Scripture are to be understood, which speak of Deliverance from the Law, as when we are said not to be under the law, but under grace, Rom. 6. 14. To be dead unto the law by the body of Christ, to be delivered from the law, that we might serve in newness of spirit, Rom. 7. 4. For these places do not make Christians to be Lawless, as some have vainly imagin'd; for we are not without law to God, but under law to Christ, 1 Cor. 9. 21. i. e. tho' we are delivered from the

the Law of *Moses*, we are still obliged in the strictest manner to obey those holy Precepts, which Christ himself hath given us in his Gospel; and the Reason why we were delivered from the Mosaical Dispensation was, not that we might take any Liberty to sin against God, but on the contrary, that we might serve him in a better manner; as appears by the fore-cited Text, which expressly tells us, *That we were delivered from the law, that we should serve in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*, Rom. 7. 6.

IV. *From the Mosaical Law, as it comprehends the Law of Nature.* IV. Christ may be said to have redeemed the Jews that were under the Law, as comprehending in it the Law of Nature, and making it more plain and easy to be understood, by the external Promulgation of it; for the Rigour, and Severity of the original Law of Nature, was mitigated by Christ, and the Covenant of Grace proclaimed in his Gospel; for whereas the original Law required perfect Obedience to all its Precepts, under the Penalty of Damnation; the Gospel offereth Pardon to the Penitents, who are humbled for their Transgressions, and turn to God in sincerity of Heart, tho' attended with Imperfection. And therefore,

Thirdly, All Men from the Penalty of the Law of Nature. Thirdly, I may take it for granted, that as God is a God of the Gentiles, and not of the Jews only, Rom. 3. 29. so Christ is a Redeemer not of the Jews alone, but of the Gentiles also; so that our Redemption by him from the Curse of the Law, must be extended to the Penalty of the Law of Nature, or, as others call it, the original Law of Creation, which comprehends all those eternal Rules of Righteousness, which result from the essential Differences of Good and Evil, and which all Mankind are bound to observe, by the very Frame and Constitution of their Natures. This is the Law the Apostle means, Rom. 2. 14, 15. where speaking of the Gentiles, who had not the Law (of Moses) he observes, that they did by nature the things contained in the law, and so having not the law (of Moses) were a law unto themselves, and shewed the work of the law to be written in their hearts. 'Tis said here to be written in their Hearts, because it was not externally revealed to them, but con-

consisted in the Dictates of right Reason, common to all Men. This was the Law by which all those Nations were to govern themselves, who had not the Scriptures nor any other external Revelations from Heaven; and this Law of Nature written in the Hearts of all Men, had its Curse and Sanction founded in common Reason, by which the *very Gentiles knew the judgment of God, that they who committed such things as were forbidden by it, were worthy of Death*, Rom. 1. 32. This also was comprehended in the Law of *Moses*, considered in its large and spiritual Sense, which tho' it added many positive Precepts, and annexed the general Curse, so as to make it due on the Violation of any of them, was never intended to repeal the Law of Nature, (as shall be farther proved by and by) which was in force before, even from the beginning of the World, and will remain in force to the end of it, *Mat. 5. 18*. In this Latitude I understand this Law, which was and is in force to all Mankind, requiring perfect Obedience on pain of Death for every failure; for doubtless the Curse of the Law, from which we were redeemed by Christ, is of equal Latitude with our Redemption from it; neither is there now any Question among Christians but our Redemption extended to the Gentiles, who were never under Obligation to the Law of *Moses*, any farther than as it was a Transcript of the Law of Nature.

With the Lord therefore we see there is Mercy, and with him there is plenteous Redemption; so that if *we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light, the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin*, 1 John 1. 7. The Fountain of Mercy is open, and God inviteth every one that *thirsteth to come unto him, with a Promise of Refreshment*, *Isaiah 55. 1*. And again, *Rev. 22. 17. Whosoever will, let him come and take the Waters of Life freely*. Strengthen then the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees, for we are not unavoidably abandoned to Death and Misery. The Covenant, or Law of Works, is not now the only Rule of Life and Death, but the second Covenant, or Law of Grace; wherein God hath promised to deal with us upon Terms of Mercy and Kind-

Kindness, and not to take the Forfeiture, nor to use that Severity, which was due to us for our Sins: This then is our Comfort, that when the Law curses and condemns, the Gospel offereth a Release, and Pardon. Nor can we reasonably doubt of God's Willingness to grant it, since he makes the first Offer, and sues unto us for Acceptance; yea, he hath already made a conditional Grant of Pardon in his Gospel, and caused it to be proclaimed to the World, and with *much long suffering and patience, waits that he may be gracious*, II. 30. 18.

Hence we may perceive the Goodness and Mercy of God towards us in our Misery; for tho' God be so great a Lover of Righteousness, and Hater of Iniquity, that he will not release or pardon Sinners, whilst they obstinately continue in their Sins, yet the sending of his Son to be a Propitiation for them, and by the Effusion of his most precious Blood, to seal a Covenant of Pardon on the gracious Conditions of his Gospel, must needs be acknowledged an exceeding Testimony and Commendation of his Mercy, especially if we consider all the other Benefits and Favours that are conveyed to us through him. For we being not able of our selves to perform the Conditions of Pardon, which he requireth of us, he hath promised the Help and Assistance of his holy Spirit, and will deny it to none, that sincerely ask it of him, *Luke 11. 13.* Yea, what is more, he doth not stay till we ask, but prevents us by his Help, quickning and exciting us to our Duty, before we are sensible of our Weakness, or desirous of his Aid; and tho' we oftentimes unthankfully repel him, yet doth he not presently forsake us, but as if he would take no Denial, is pleased to follow us Day after Day, with renewed Offers of his Grace; which he is so willing that we should accept, that he is said to be *grieved when we refuse them*, Ephes. 4. 30. By this holy Spirit he condescends to renew our Nature, relieve our Infirmary, and standeth knocking at the Door of our Hearts, even seeking for Reception and Entertainment. Add to this, all the external Means which God affordeth unto Sinners, to turn them from their Ways, and prepare them for his gracious Pardon;

don; such as the sending his Gospel to them, with all the Mercies that attend it; his many Warnings and frequent Calls; his Patience and long Suffering, waiting for their Amendment; and we must be forced to confess, that he hath done all, that on his part was necessary, to make us eternally happy: For he hath given his Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins, and hath passed a conditional Act, or Grant of Pardon in his Gospel, and afforded both outward and inward Helps and Aids of Grace, to enable us to perform the Conditions required of us; so that nothing can now deprive us of his Favour, but a wilful Refusal of all this Mercy, by an obstinate continuance in our Sins. So that tho' we have formerly provoked him against us, and justly deserve to be abandoned for ever, the Fault will be entirely in our selves, in case we recover not his Love and Favour, who not only offers it unto us, but with much Compassion invites us to Acceptance; not excluding any from his Mercy but Infidels and Impenitents, who exclude themselves by a wilful Perseverance in their Rebellions against him. Yea, if we duly consider the Preparations of the Divine Mercy, we shall find that our Pardon is in some respects passed long ago; I mean so far as concerneth Christ's part in meriting it for us, and his Father's part in promising it to us on the gracious Conditions of his Gospel: For his Promise is a conditional Grant of Pardon, which never faileth of Effect when the Condition is performed; and tho' till then we can lay no Claim to it, yet the Tender of a Pardon to guilty rebels, who are obnoxious to all the Curses of his Law, is a very great Demonstration of the Goodness and Mercy of God. Which might be farther illustrated, by a Representation of the Greatness of the Misery, from which he sent the Redeemer to deliver us; for the Wretchedness of our Captivity, illustrates the Mercy of our Redemption, and we shall never be duly sensible of the Mercy of God in it, till we seriously so consider the Extent and Meaning of the Curse, to which by Sin we were obnoxious; how it comprehends not only Temporal and Spiritual Misery in this present Life, but everlasting Pains in the Life to

come, which exceed all that we can suffer in this World, as much as Eternity exceeds a Moment.

These things are not spoken to flatter the Presumptuous, but to comfort the mourning, humble and penitent Sinner. Here is no Encouragement at all to the stubborn and impenitent, but on supposition of his Reformation and Return to God. When *Christ gave himself a Ransome for all*, 1 Tim. 2. 6. he intended not that any should be actually pardoned, whilst they impenitently continued in their Sins, but established a gracious Covenant, wherein he hath promised Deliverance, upon the Conditions of Faith and Repentance, which includes a holy Resolution and Purpose of new Obedience; so that the State of Pardon and Peace with God, beginneth when a Sinner is converted to him, and is continued, by a continued Care and Endeavour to observe his holy Law. Tho' the Price of our Redemption be already paid by Christ, and accepted by his Father, in which respect he is truly said to have redeemed us from the Curse of the Law; yet the constant Tenor of his Gospel makes it clear, that we are not actually, fully and immediately, delivered from it by his Death, but must still depend upon his Intercession, and expect Deliverance upon no other Terms, than those which he himself hath prescribed in the gracious Covenant, established by his Blood.

This Explication of the Curse of the Law, puts us under an absolute Necessity of following those Courses, which Christ in his Gospel hath prescribed, in order to our Deliverance, and Freedom from it; which will lead us to consider the Curse of the Gospel also, and how it differs from that of the Law. That the Curse of the Divine Law is very dreadful, hath been already shewn. That we have all transgressed, and broken the Law, every Man's Conscience will be a Witness. That every Sinner is by his Transgressions become liable and obnoxious to the Penalty threatned in the Law, which he hath broken, common Reason will be forced to acknowledge. That there is no escaping this Penalty, without a Pardon by the free Grace of God, through the Redemption which is in Jesus Christ, every Christian, that under-
stands

stands the first Principles of his Religion, will readily grant. That Faith in Christ, even such a Faith as is effectual in Repentance and Conversion from Sin to God, is constantly required in the Gospel, in order unto Pardon, no Man that hath either read or heard it, can be ignorant. And yet these things are not so duly regarded by the generality of Christians, as to bring them to consult their present and eternal Safety, by seeking earnestly for Pardon and Deliverance from Sin, in the true Way and Method prescribed in the Gospel. To bring them to it, I shall therefore attempt to prove two things.

First, That as long as Men continue in an impenitent State, they are still under the Curse of the Law, liable to all the Miseries comprehended in it.

Secondly, That if they go on, and finally persevere in their evil Courses, they will fall under the Curse of the Gospel Covenant too, which is severer than the former, and from which there is no Redemption, no not by Christ himself; for 'tis from the Curse of the Law, and not of the Gospel, we were redeemed by Christ. The first is avoidable through Grace, and may be escaped, if we follow his Counsel and Directions; but the other is irremediable, and must unavoidably be endured by final Impenitents, *Who shall be sent cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, Mat. 25. 41.*

First, As long as any continue in an impenitent State, *Whilst* they are still under the Curse of the Law, liable and *Men continue impenitent, they are under the Curse of the Law.* obnoxious to all the Miseries comprehended in it: Tho' Christ hath paid an all-sufficient Ransome, and thereby redeemed us from a Necessity of Perishing; tho' for the sake of Christ, the full Execution of the Curse is suspended, and a conditional Act of Pardon proclaimed in the Gospel, yet while the Condition is neglected, and Men persist impenitently in their Sins, they are still under the Curse of the Law; *i. e.* liable to the Penalty threatned in it, being not yet released by the Gospel; and how soon they may be under it in an higher Sense, and really feel those Evils, which they are now warned to avoid, no Man knows. This, if duly consider'd, is a very sad Condition; for the Curses of God are effectual: So that

what *Balack* falsely said of *Balaam*, may be truly said of God, *He whom thou blessest, is blessed, and he whom thou cursest, is cursed*, Numb. 22. 6. Tho' the Curse be not presently executed, it is due, and in right belongs to all Impenitents, who are in God's Debt for Wrath and Punishment; for Sins are called *Debts*, Mat. 6. 12. And the Execution of his Wrath and Vengeance, is called *Paying*, Is. 59. 18. *According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his Adversaries, and recompence to his enemies.* But,

Under the Curse of the Gospel. Secondly, That which is the most terrible Consideration of all, is this, That evil and impenitent Persons, who still go on, and finally persevere in their sinful Courses, besides the Curse of the Law, will at last fall under the Curse of the Gospel Covenant too, which is severer than the former, and from which there is no Redemption: For while Men wilfully continue in Sin, and obstinately refuse to turn to God by Repentance, and Faith in Christ, notwithstanding all the Calls and Invitations of Mercy in the Gospel; this Refusal, if it be final, excludeth a Sinner from all Hopes of Pardon, even by the Tenor of the Covenant of Grace.

The Curse of the Gospel, different from that of the Law. This then is a peremptory condemning Sin, according to a special and peculiar Threatning of the Gospel, which frequently threatens Unbelievers and Impenitents, with Wrath and Condemnation. I call this a special and peculiar Threatning of the Gospel, or Law of Faith, because it differs in many respects from the Threatning of the Law of Works.

First, In respect of its End. First, In respect of its special End, or Design; for whereas the Threatning of the Law of Works, was delivered to Man in his State of Innocence, to deter and restrain him from Sin in general; the Threatning of the Gospel was not added, till he had sinned, and that to bring him to Repentance, or to deter him from Continuance in Sin.

Secondly, Of the Matter. Secondly, In respect of the Matter of the Condition on which it becometh due; for whereas the Threatning of the Law is directed against every Sin, the Threatning of the Gospel is in a special Manner directed against Impenitence and Unbelief; the Law condemns every Sinner, but the Gospel peremptorily

condemneth none, but such as impenitently continue in their Sins ; for which upon Repentance it tendreth a Pardon. The Reason why Men are liable to the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, is, because they have sinned ; but the Reason why they are liable to the Condemnation of the Gospel Covenant, is not merely because they sinned against the Law, but because they refuse the Remedy ; for since God in the Gospel offereth a free and full Pardon of all other Sins, upon the Condition of Faith and Repentance, the Reason why wicked Men shall be condemned is, not only because they have sinned, but because they refuse the Remedy ; *i. e.* because they do not believe and repent, at the Publishing the Gospel to them. This then is a plain Difference between the Threatning of the Covenant of Works, and that of the Covenant of Grace ; that the one was for Sin in general, *i. e.* for every Sin ; the other, for one sort of Sin in special, *i. e.* for the final Rejection and Abuse of Grace. In the Law, or Covenant of Works, perfect Obedience is required, under the Penalty of Death, which therefore becometh due upon the Commission of any particular Sin ; but in the Gospel, there is a Pardon offered for all Sins, upon the Condition of Repentance and Faith in Christ ; so that there is no absolute Condemnation, but for Impenitence and Unbelief. Other Sins indeed are often punished with temporal Afflictions, as Terrors of Conscience, Loss of Comfort, and Withdrawings of abused Grace ; but the Wrath to come, the Penalty of eternal Death, by the Tenor of the Gospel, belongeth only to the Obstinate and Incurable, who continue in Rebellion against the Redeemer. And this I say discovers a manifest difference between the Curse of the Law, and the Curse of the Gospel Covenant, in reference to the Matter of their several Conditions ; for, as was hinted before, the Condition of the Curse of the Law was Sin in general, or any one particular Sin whatsoever ; but the Condition of the Curse of the Gospel Covenant, is impenitent Continuance in Sin, or an obstinate Refusal to turn to God by Repentance, and Faith in Christ.

Thirdly, *Thirdly*, The Curse and Threatning of the Law and Gospel, differ in respect of the different Grounds or Reasons of them: The first was instituted for Sin against God, considered as Creator, and requiring Obedience to his Law, by right of Creation: The other is added by him, as Redeemer for the Refusal of his Mercy, and Denial of that Service which was due unto him, by the farther Right of Redemption.

Fourthly, *Fourthly*, The Curse of the Law and Gospel, differ in regard of the different States of the Subjects; for the first and original Law, was given to Man in Innocence, and threatned him only in case of Disobedience: The other, supposes him fallen into Sin, and threatens him for Impenitence. And since the Fall, the Law of Works condemns Men as Sinners in general; but the Gospel condemneth them farther, as Sinners in special; *i. e.* for final Rejection of Christ, in case they are guilty of it.

Fifthly, *Fifthly*, The Threatning of the Law and Gospel, differ in regard of the Nature and Degree of the Penalty threatned in them. Besides the Penalty threatned in the Law, the Gospel moreover threatens Impenitents, with the Loss of all the Blessings and saving Benefits offered in it; such as Pardon of Sin, Restauration to the Favour of God, Justification, Adoption, and Right to the eternal Inheritance in Heaven, as purchased by the Redeemer; the Aids, Comfort and Seal of the Holy Spirit, and in general all other Mercies and Blessings hoped for through Christ, whether in this, or the other World. In the Gospel I say, impenitent Unbelievers are threatned with the Loss of all saving Benefits whatsoever, that are offered in it to the sinful World: Which Loss, or Privation of saving Mercy, is a Penalty peculiar to the Gospel Covenant, and belongeth not at all to the Threatning of the original Law; for tho' the primitive Law, given to Man in Innocence, did in case of Sin threaten Death in general, which contained in it the Loss of God's Favour, and all the Happiness enjoyed in Paradise, and the Hopes of all that it promised for the future; yet that Law never threatned, nor indeed could threaten, the Loss of Christ, or any Gospel Mercies, which it never promised.

mised. The Law did not promise Christ, or Pardon, or any other Mercy, as purchased by him for fall'n Man; and therefore if there had been no Gospel, nor Offer of restoring Mercy, the want, or not having of it, would have been a meer Negation, and not a Privation, or proper and penal Loss, unless Men can lose, or be deprived of that which they never had, so much as Impossibility or Hope; which to imagine is absurd: But now, the Gospel offering Pardon and Life, notwithstanding the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, and Threatning the Loss of its gracious Offers to such as refuse the Conditions of them; this is a penal Privation, or a Punishment of Loss, no where threatned but in the Gospel; for that being the only Covenant which promiseth Christ, and Mercy through him, must needs be likewise the only Covenant, under which any can forfeit, or be deprived of their Hopes in him: So that now, Non-liberation from the Curse of the Law, or the Loss of the Blessing of Pardon, and all other Benefits offered in the Gospel, is manifestly a Punishment peculiar to the new Covenant, and belongs not to the original Law, which allowed no such thing. Again, as the Punishment of Loss, so likewise the Punishment of Sense, threatned in the Gospel, is greater than that which was threatned in the Law; for as it is called a sorer Punishment, being to be inflicted for Ingratitude and Rebellion against the Redeemer, so doubtless the Sense and Remembrance of the forementioned Loss, together with the Grips and Accusations of Conscience, for their Folly, in neglecting so great Salvation, will be a farther degree of Misery, and a Punishment never threatned in the Covenant of Works.

Sixthly, The Penalty threatned for the Violation of the Gospel Covenant, differs from that which was threatned in the Law, in the manner of its Sanction; for by the Event it now plainly appears, that the Threatning of the Original Law, was not peremptory excluding all future Remedy and Relief; whereas the Threatning of the Gospel Covenant, is peremptory and irrevocable, admitting no Redemption from it to all eternity. Tho' the first Law discovered none, yet

Sixthly,
*In the man-
ner of its
Sanction.*

yet it excluded not all possibility of a Remedy ; that Law being violated, the Threatning was dispensable on valuable Considerations, and its Obligation to Punishment was dissolvable, and the Punishment it self removable, for Christ hath redeemed us from it : So that in his Gospel, there is a Remedy at hand to deliver us from his Curse, which Remedy will be effectual, as soon as the Condition is performed ; but the Threatning of the Gospel Covenant, to the final Non-Performers of its Conditions is remediless and indispensable, its Obligation to Punishment eternally indissolvable, and the Punishment certain and unavoidable ; God having determin'd, *that to such as tread under foot the blood of his Son, there shall remain no more sacrifice for sin*, Heb. 12. 26 and 29.

Thus we see, that the Curse or Penalty of the Gospel Covenant, differs from that which was threatned in the Law in several respects, they being threatned on different Grounds, to different Ends, and different Subjects ; there being a difference likewise in the Matter of the Conditions, the Nature and Degree of the Penalty it self, as also in the Manner of the Sanction ; the one being relaxable, and admitting of a Remedy ; the other being irreversible, excluding all Relief unto eternity. These last I only mention by the way, the better to make it appear, that there is a special and peculiar Curse, threatned in the Gospel Covenant, distinct from that which was threatned in the Law.

This special and peculiar Penalty, threatned for the Violation of the Gospel Covenant, is more severe and terrible than that threatned for the Violation of the Law of *Moses*, or of Nature. This also is very clear and manifest from the Scripture, which frequently represents the Condition of those to be the most miserable, who abuse all the Grace and Mercy offered them in the Gospel, assuring us, *that the Abuse of Grace will tend to their heavier Doom, and greater Condemnation in the World to come* : For this is the Condemnation, *That light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light*, John 3. 19. Its the Condemnation by way of Eminence : Yea, to such, a double Condemnation will be due ; one for

the Breaches of the Law, another for their Violation of the Gospel Covenant. They are not only condemnable for Sin against the Law of Works, but for standing out against the Law of Grace also; the Abuse whereof, will aggravate their Guilt, and render them liable to the more heavy Punishment in the Day of Retribution: So that this is the most dreadful Condemnation, to be feared more than a single Hell, because it includes an Excess of infernal Pains; for as we believe there shall be degrees of Glory in Heaven, so, the Scripture in this case being very plain, we cannot reasonably doubt, but there shall likewise be degrees of Punishment in Hell, answerable to the degrees of Wickedness here on Earth; which will be highly aggravated by an Abuse of all the Grace and Mercy, which is offered in the Gospel to such as enjoy, and yet obey it not. And upon this account we are admonished to look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, Heb. 12. 15. and that for this reason, because we are not come to mount Sinai, from whence the law was delivered, v. 18. but to mount Sion, v. 22. from whence the gospel was proclaimed; And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, v. 24. For as under the Gospel, the Grace of God hath more gloriously appeared than under the Law, so our Ingratitude will be greater, and Account more severe and dreadful, if we take not the better heed unto our selves. Therefore it follows, Heb. 12. 25. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: For if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: i. e. If the Israelites escaped not the Wrath and Vengeance of God, when they were disobedient to the Law of Moses, which was delivered from Mount Sinai, much less shall we escape, if we despise the Laws of Christ, who came from Heaven, and with his own Mouth first promulgated them to the World; and now being ascended into Heaven, still speaketh unto us by his Spirit, Word and Ministers. So that these Words, with many others, clearly shew, that as the Grace of God, which hath appeared to us in the Gospel, more convincingly teacheth us, to deny all Ungodliness and worldly

worldly Lusts, and with clearer Light reprove the Works of Darknes, than in any of his former Dispensations, so no Man can stop his Ear, or harden his Heart, against such clear and plain Revelations of God, but will thereby aggravate his Guilt, and heighten the Dreadfulness of his Account. Hence the Gospel is so full of Caveats and Warnings, drawn from the fearful and inevitable Destruction of those, that abused the more low and dark Dispensations of God, compared with the clearer and more full Revelations of his Will, under the Days of the Gospel; you have them almost in every Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*: The Design of which, was to exhort the persecuted *Hebrews* to Constancy, and Perseverance in the Christian Faith; by shewing them, that they only should be made Partakers of the Benefits of the Death of Christ, who in the Day of Grace performed the Conditions on which they were offered in the Gospel; and that they who finally refuse them on these Terms, should never have any future Advantages by them, but that they shall be left without hope of Remedy, *the wrath of God abiding on them*, John 3. 36. *And their deserts of wrath and punishment being increased, by neglecting so great salvation, and treading under foot the Son of God*, Heb. 2. 3. and Chap. 10. 29.

From hence we may observe two things.

First, The Mitigation, or Abatement of the Rigor and Severity of the Law.

Secondly, The remaining Necessity of performing the Conditions of the Gospel.

The Abatement of the Rigor of the Law.

First, The foregoing Account of the Law, from the Curse whereof we were redeemed by the Death of Christ, will inform us of an Abatement, or Mitigation in the Rigor of the Law.

The Law I mean, the strict original Law of Works, required perfect, exact, and perpetual Obedience to all its Precepts; and *Cursed every one that continued not in all things that were written therein to do them*, Gal. 3. 10. The Blessing which it promised, was not to be obtained, but upon the Terms which it proposed, which were perfect and unfinning Performance of all that it required; whoever failed in any point, became obnoxious

obnoxious to its Curse and Condemnation: Neither could he hope for Pardon by that Law, which did not promise any, but left the Offender without Remedy, under fearful Expectations of Judgment and Execution. From this Rigor and Severity of the original Law of Works, Christ hath delivered us by his Death, being made a Curse for us, and introduced a better Covenant; in which he invites us to Repentance, and by that to Mercy and Pardon, upon our Amendment and Reformation: So that in this Sense, we are not under the Law, but under Grace; not under a strict and rigorous Covenant of Works, indispensably exacting Perfection of Obedience, upon pain of inevitable Damnation, but under a Covenant of Mercy and Pardon, whereby we are still encouraged to amend and return to our Duty, in hopes of Acceptation, through the Merits and Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yea, this Covenant of Mercy, was in force ever since the first Promise of Christ in Paradise, tho' not fully revealed until the Fulness of Time, which God in his infinite Wisdom had appointed, for the clearest Manifestation of his Love and Mercy to the World: For the Covenant, or Law of Works, was never the only Rule of Life and Death, since the Fall of Man, whereby it became impossible to be saved by it. Ever since that time, Christ was Extant in Promises, and in Types, until his Incarnation, or Appearance in the Flesh; and all Pardon and Forgiveness, was conveyed through him to the Faithful, who lived before his Birth. He was the promised Seed, *Gen. 3. 15. Gal. 3. 16.* and through him, all divine Grace and Favour was in all Ages dispensed to the World. And this is that which the Apostle tells the unbelieving Jews, in the Epistle to the *Romans*, Chap. 3 and 4. and the Judaizing Christians, in the Epistle to the *Galatians*: For when the unbelieving Jews, vainly expected Justification by the Law of Works, in opposition to Christ, and the Gospel of his Grace; and the other, tho' professing the Name of Christ, joined Law and Gospel together, as equally Necessary in order to Salvation; the Apostle confutes them both, by shewing, *That all having sinned, and broken the Law, none could ever be justified*

fied by it, but must of necessity seek for mercy, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, Rom. 3. 13, 14. That as many as were of the works of the law, i. e. as many as slighted the grace of the gospel, and expected justification by the law of works, were under its curse, and therefore were greatly mistaken, it being impossible to be justified by the same law, by which they stood cursed and condemned, for their manifold violations of it, Gal. 3. 10. To the same purpose, several other Arguments are urged by him ; all of which very clearly prove, that the Law, as it stands opposed to the Gospel, and considered as a Covenant of Works, promising Life on no other Terms, than exact Obedience to its Demands, and threatening Death upon every Failure; never was, nor indeed could be, the Rule of Justification before God ; and that God, mercifully considering the Impossibility of being justified by it, in this our sinful and degenerate State, had set forth Christ as a propitiation through faith in his blood, Rom. 3. 24. And that all who expected to be justified, or saved, must believe in him, even as Abraham believed in God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness, Gal. 3. 6. This way of evangelical Justification, not upon strict Terms of Law and Justice, but upon Terms of Grace and Mercy ; i. e. by Faith in Christ ; tho' such a faith as purifies the heart, Acts 15. 9. worketh by love, Gal. 5. 6. and so is effectual in repentance, and reformation of life, 1 Thes. 2. 13. This way, I say, of Justification by the Gospel Covenant, founded in the Blood of Christ, who hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, most plainly shews, that the Rigour of the original Law is much abated, and that God doth not now deal with us upon strict Terms of Law and Justice ; but for the sake of Christ, or in consideration of what he hath done and suffered for us, is graciously pleased to readmit us into his Favour, which we had forfeited, and lost by our Sins ; so that instead of the Curse and Punishment, which is due unto us for our Transgressions of his Law, he hath promised Pardon, and the greatest Blessings, upon the reasonable Conditions of his Gospel.

Which leads me to the second Particular, namely, The Necessity of performing the Conditions of the Gospel :

Gospel: For as I intimated formerly, it's the Curse of the Law, and not of the Gospel Covenant, from which we are redeemed by Christ; He was made a Curse for us, to deliver us from the Curse and Misery due unto us, for the Violation of the Covenant of Works; but never intended to deliver those, that continue to abuse his Mercy, offered in the Covenant of Grace. And in this Sense it is very manifest, that the Gospel affords no Pardon to its Transgressors; *i. e.* to Men continuing all their Lives, even unto Death, in Impenitency and Unbelief; the Gospel indeed affords Pardon to the Transgressors of the Law, yea, and to Transgressors of the Commands of the New Testament, so far as they are Transgressions of the Law, and threatned by that general Curse, *Cursed is he that doth not all, that any way is revealed to be his Duty*, provided they perform the Gospel Conditions; but the Gospel affords no Pardon at all, to them that fall under its Curse, by not performing the Gospel Condition; that is, to them who live and die in a State of Enmity and Rebellion against Christ. He that questions the Truth of this, *i. e.* he that supposes Pardon of Sin, for such as perform not the Conditions of the Gospel, must set up a new Gospel, that was never taught us by Christ, or his Apostles; must affirm, that Men dying impenitent, and Enemies to Christ, may be pardoned and saved, notwithstanding the final Abuse of the Day of his Grace, and obstinate continuing in Sin all their Lives; or else he must fancy a future Expiation in some imaginary Purgatory after Death, which is so contrary to the perpetual Doctrine of the Scripture, which makes this Life alone the Season of Grace, the only time of Mercy, wherein we can hope to make our Peace with God, that I shall not waste any time in the Confutation of it. If then the Gospel of Christ afford no Pardon to them, who do not in this Life perform its Conditions; if the unbelieving and impenitent, who persevere in Sin, and continue unchanged to the end, will be left without Remedy or Relief, then every one may easily perceive, the great and indispensable Necessity, of performing the Conditions required in the Gospel; *i. e.* the Necessity of belie-

The Necessity of performing the Conditions of the Gospel.

The PATH to LIBERTY.

believing in Christ, repenting of his former Sins, and giving up himself in Sincerity of Obedience unto God ; for unless he doth so, unless he believe, repent, and be converted from the Service of Sin, to the Service of God and Righteousness, he will at last lose all his Hopes in Christ, and fall under the Curse of the Law, as having no Title to the Promises of the Gospel ; yea, and will moreover be thought worthy of a much sorer Punishment, for his Abuse of Grace, and treading under Foot the Son of God.

I should now pass to enquire into the Meaning of our Redemption from the Curse of the Law by the Death of Christ, and the Gospel Conditions ; but for the better understanding of the former Discourses, and clearing the way to those which are to follow, there are two dependent Questions, which may deserve some farther Considerations.

For, *first*, whereas in the former Discourses I have more than once pressed the Necessity of performing the Gospel Conditions upon this Consideration, *That it is the Curse of the Law, and not of the Gospel Covenant, from which we were redeemed by Christ* : So that he who submits not to the Terms of Mercy, required in the Gospel, will be left without Hope or Remedy, eternally to suffer, not only the Curse of the Law, but those higher degrees of Misery too, of which he shall be thought worthy, for his Abuse of Gospel Grace. 'Tis not improbable, but some that have not duly considered these things, may be somewhat unsatisfied at my Saying, that Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, but not from the Curse of the Gospel Covenant ; and hereupon demand, whether Christ hath not satisfied for Sins against the Gospel, as well as against the Law, and so may be said to have redeemed us from the Curse of both, tho' the Apostle mention the Law only, *Gal. 3. 13.*

Secondly, Whereas from our Redemption from the Curse of the Law by the Death of Christ, I inferred a Mitigation, or Abatement in the Rigour and Severity of the Law, it may farther be demanded, Whether this Mitigation amount to an Abrogation of it, or not ? *i. e.* whether after our Redemption by Christ, and Confirmation of the Gospel Covenant, the Law be

be yet in force, requiring perfect Obedience to all its Precepts, under the Penalty of Damnation ; or whether it be null, and repealed, and Christians under no other Law, but the Law of Christ as Mediator ; *i. e.* the Gospel, or Law of Grace. A clear Resolution of these two Questions will be of great use, both for the right understanding of what hath already passed concerning them, and for discerning the main Difference between the Law and the Gospel. And therefore to put an end to several fruitless Controversies, which have not only distracted the Minds of Men, but seduced some to believe themselves to be Lawless, without Danger of Curse, or Punishment for their Sins,* I shall take them into some farther Consideration.

And *first*, as to the first of these Questions, *viz. Whether* Christ hath not suffered for our Sins against the Gospel, as well as against the Law ; and so whether he may not be said to have redeemed us from the Curse of both, tho' the Apostle mention the Law only ? I answer, that tho' some affirm, and others deny it, I cannot find any real difference between them ; for the Difference is not so much in the thing it self, as in Words and Expressions, which some understand in one Sense, and some in another ; and so seem to differ, whereas they really agree, did they rightly take one anothers Meaning : As for instance, they who think it harsh and intollerable to say, that Christ our Mediator by his Death did only expiate Sins against the *Law*, and *Covenant of Works*, and that he hath not suffered for the Breaches of the *Covenant of Grace*, do not understand the same thing, as others do, who deny there is any Pardon allowed for them in the Gospel of Christ. The first, who would have it said that Christ hath suffered for the Breaches of the new Covenant ; by *Breaches* of it do mean, either I. The Defects of Repentance, Faith and Love, (which Defects are improperly counted Breaches of the Covenant of Grace, when Repentance, Faith and Love, are sincere and sound ;) or else, II. The temporary Non-Performance of the Conditions of the Gospel ; which, tho' it leaves a Man under Guilt, obnoxious to Wrath and Condemnation for a time,

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that is, so long as he continues a Rebel and Enemy to Christ, yet it doth not leave him hopeless, because there is Mercy and Pardon promised upon his Conversion and Change, when he ceaseth any longer to be accounted a Breaker of the Gospel Covenant, or III. by Breaches of the New Covenant, they mean, such wilful Revolts and Back-slidings, which too often happen after Mens first Conversion to God, and which are indeed Violations of their own Covenant, Promise and Vow, first made to God in Baptism, and afterwards renewed at the other Sacrament, and in all serious Engagements of our selves unto his Service at other times. But these Breaches of our Engagements unto God, tho' they are truly Violations of the Covenant for a time, and justly to be accounted Forfeitures of our Right unto the Mercies and Blessings of it, yet being retracted by true Repentance, they are not such Violations, as will deprive us of all Mercy and Benefit by it; for in this Covenant God hath considered our Frailty, inviting us still to amend, whenever we do amiss, and encouraging us thereto with Promises of Pardon and Acceptance: Now since all Pardon is vouchsafed to us for the sake of Christ, there can remain no Doubt or Question, but that in all the three fore-explained Senses, Christ hath suffered for our Breaches of the Gospel Covenant, even for all Sins whatsoever, for which there is any Pardon allowed in the Gospel. But then in the second place, there are others, who by the Breach or Violation of the Gospel Covenant, understand such a strict and proper Violation of it, as makes Men actual Subjects of its peremptory Curse, or Obligation to remediless Punishment; *i. e.* by the Breach of the New Covenant, for which they say Christ never satisfied, they always mean a final Breach, by obstinate Continuance in Impenitency and Unbelief, or a final Non-Performance of the Gospel Conditions; it being this only that is so peremptorily threatned in the Covenant of Grace, as to make a Man remedilessly subject to its Curse, or Threatning. And speaking of this peremptory Curse, which according to the Gospel belongs to final Impenitents or Unbelievers, is very manifest, that Christ never redeemed any

Man

Man from it, nor promised any Deliverance, but on the contrary hath plainly told us, *That he that believeth not, shall be damned*, Mark 16. 16. And *except ye repent, ye shall perish*, Luke 13. 3. They who use this plain Language, the better to awaken the presumptuous World, do readily acknowledge, that in redeeming us from the Curse of the Law, Christ hath procured an universal Pardon; I mean a general Pardon of all Sins whatsoever, for them that perform the Conditions of Pardon prescribed in the Gospel: They not only grant, but earnestly maintain, that all Sins whatsoever, whether against the Precepts of the Law, or Gospel, are Pardonable through the Mercy of God in Christ, and shall be actually pardoned upon true Repentance, and Faith in Christ: So that not only Sins against the Law, but the Imperfections of true Faith and Repentance; yea, former Impenitency and Infidelity, tho' Sins against the special Precepts of the Gospel, shall be pardoned when repented of, and consequently were expiated by the Sacrifice of Christ; only they deny, that such Sins which are retracted by Repentance, do involve the Sinner under the actual and peremptory Threatning of the Law of Grace.

This is no more than is acknowledged on the other side, and must needs be acknowledged and allowed by all Men, who believe, that obstinate Infidels and Impenitents, who finally persevere in their Enmity and Rebellion against the Redeemer, shall die and perish in their Sins, and so lose all the saving Benefits of his Blood: There is no reason therefore that any body should be offended, because we affirm that Christ, who hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, hath not redeemed any Man from the Curse, or peculiar Penalty, which is peremptorily threatned against the Breach, or Violation of the Gospel Covenant; for by the Breach of it, we in this case always understand, the final Neglect and Non-Performance of its Conditions, or an obstinate Perseverance unto Death in such evil Courses, as render a Man incapable of Mercy and Pardon, according to the Terms and Tenor of the Gospel.

But to leave no place for any remaining Scruple,

and to let you plainly see what is granted, and what is here denied, let it be observed,

First, That we not only grant, but stedfastly believe and teach, that the Blood of Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all Sin, against whatsoever Law committed. If we perform the Gospel Condition, and come within the compass of that Latitude, which Christ by his new Law allows, our Sins of partial Unbelief, and all other sorts of Gospel Disobedience, are pardoned on the Terms thereof, by the Tenor of this New Covenant, which Christ hath purchased by his Blood, whose Blood is therefore called *the Blood of the New Covenant*. By this gracious Covenant, a renewed Pardon is still granted to all Believers, for every Sin at any time committed, upon sincere Repentance and Reformation; and Christ proposeth himself unto the World upon these gracious Terms, That if they cordially close with him, and receive him as Lord and Christ, as their King and Saviour, all their past Sins shall be forgiven; and whensoever they shall sin for the future, and come short of that Duty they are to pay unto him, upon their Repentance they shall be renewed, and God, through, and by him, and for his sake, will exercise continual Acts of Pardon towards them in all such Cases, and this Day of Grace is, for ought we know, of the same Duration with every Man's Life. Every Man, while he lives, has an Opportunity of Embracing the Gospel; and whosoever falls by Temptation, and the Power of Corruption, after he has so done, has yet a continued Possibility, while God spares him in this World, to be restored to a pardoned justified State by Repentance.

But then, *Secondly*, whosoever fails, or comes short in performing the Gospel Condition, whosoever closeth not with the Redeemer, (who hath all Power put, by the Father, into his Hands) upon his own Terms, not one of that Man's Sins will he ever remit, or account for to the Father, but he is left to answer that most dreadful Charge of the *Law*; and besides, by *neglecting so great Salvation*, falls under the *utmost* Condemnation of the Gospel, is left to God as supreme Judge of the World, in the highest Exercise of

Justice;

Justice; and having refused the Terms of his Mercy, is left to God without the Interposition of a Mediator. The Terror of which Condition, the Apostle describes, Heb. 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Where he means, without a Mediator; for 'tis spoken in *terrorem* to the converted Jews, who were in great Danger of Apostatizing from the Gospel, and the Faith of the Mediator, and of returning back to the old cancelled Dispensation of the Law; the end of which was Christ.

The Tenor of the New Covenant being to this effect, He that heartily repenteth and believeth, whilst the Day of Salvation lasts, and the Season of Grace is not past, shall be saved; and he that doth not, shall be damned. For so we are to understand that fearful Threatning of our Saviour; he that *believeth not shall be damned*, Mark 16. 16. For the Meaning is not, he that believeth not to day, or to morrow, shall be damned, tho' he should afterwards repent and believe; for then none but such as come in at the first Invitation could be saved: But the Meaning is surely this, He that continueth in Unbelief, or all the Day of Grace obstinately refuseth to submit to the Obedience of Faith, he shall inevitably be condemned in the Day of Eternal Judgment. The Tenor, I say, of the New Covenant running thus, He that *believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life*; but he that is *unpersuadable, contumacious, and disobedient to the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*, John 3. 36. There's Liberty to come in at any time, whilst the Day of Salvation is prolonged; so that they only shall be damned, as Transgressors of this Covenant, who die impenitently and in unbelief. However, this is no Encouragement presumptuously to go on in Sin; for all the time they delay Repentance, they are liable to the Curse, and under Condemnation by the Law, and in continual Danger of being condemned by the Gospel too, as having refused the necessary Conditions of Pardon. Yea, they are *condemned already*, John 3. 18. not only by the Law of Works, but even by the Letter of the Covenant of Grace, which absolveth none but Penitent Believers: Yet the Sentence of the Judge being not yet

passed, but farther time of Respite and Tryal being given to them, and the Invitations to Repentance and Pardon still continued, they are not absolutely condemned, nor left without Hopes of Mercy and Encouragement to amend their Doings; only the obstinate and persevering Sinner, shall be eventually condemned by the Gospel Covenant, because such only shall in Judgment be esteemed Violators of it.

By this you may plainly see, that, the Covenant of Grace allowing Men to come in at any time before their Death, its Conditions are not strictly and properly broken, but by obstinate perseverance in Impenitence and Unbelief, and for this it is certain Christ never died; so that there is an absolute Necessity of performing the Gospel Conditions, if we expect the Benefits of his Death; for the State of Impenitent Believers, who die in their Sins, will be desperate and irremediable, being cut off from all Possibility to any Claim to the Benefits of the Sacrifice of Christ, they will eternally be left to the Wrath and Justice of God, who to his Enemies is a *consuming Fire*, Heb. 12. 29. In short, the Death of Christ was never intended to redeem any such as finally reject all the Grace and Mercy offered in the Gospel; and therefore their Case will be desperate, and their Condition irrecoverable, for they shall have no Kindness or Favour shewn unto them, besides that which they have formerly received, abused and lost, and therefore must undergo the Curse of the Law themselves, and moreover, suffer whatever former Punishment they shall be thought worthy of, for their Abuse of Gospel Grace. I need not add any more, it being plain from what I said before, that the Punishment threatned against final Impenitents, for their Violation of the Covenant of Grace, doth in a peculiar manner belong to the Gospel, and not to the Law; for tho' it comprehendeth the Curse of the Law, leaving impenitent *Unbelievers* to the *Wrath of God*, due unto them for the Violations of his holy Law, *John* 3. 36. yet it superaddeth much more, and differeth in so many Respects and Circumstances, that it may justly be stiled a
Curse,

Curse, or Penalty, peculiar to the Gospel Covenant.

The remaining Question is, whether the Mitigation, *Whether the Mitigation of the Rigour of the Law amounts to an Abrogation of it.* or Abatement of the Rigour and Severity of the Law, inferred formerly from our Redemption from the Curse of the Law, by the Death of Christ, amounts to an Abrogation of it, or not; *i. e.* whether after our Redemption by Christ, and Confirmation of the Gospel Covenant, the Law be still in force, so as to exact perfect Obedience to all its Precepts, under the Penalty of Death and Condemnation: Or whether the Law were nulled, or repealed, and Christians now under no other Law, but the Law of Christ as Mediator; *i. e.* the Gospel, or Law of Grace. That the Ceremonial Law is abrogated, and laid aside, is past all doubt; so that the present Question is, only concerning the Moral Law, and Original Law of Creation, called sometimes the Law of Works; because Works, and not Faith in Christ, *i. e.* Works exactly answering to its Demands, even Perfection of Obedience, was the only Condition of its Promises.

Now if any ask whether this Law be yet in force, or whether it was abrogated and repealed by Christ, and his Introduction of the Law of Faith; *That the Law is not abrogated, prov'd.* I answer, that our Redemption by Christ, and his Introduction of the Law of Faith, hath not abrogated, or repealed the Law of Works; and this is proved,

First, From Scripture, Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid: Yea, we establish the law. *First, From Scripture.* faith the Apostle, Rom. 3. 31. and Christ himself tells us plainly, *That he came not to destroy the law, or the prophets; and that one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law, till heaven and earth do pass, and all things come to an end,* Mat. 5. 17, 18. The Law is still the strength of Sin, 1 Cor. 15. 56. Both in respect of its Precepts forbidding Sin, and of its Threatnings denouncing Wrath, as due to every Sinner. And therefore is not abrogated; for if it were, the Obligation of it would be destroyed, and there would be neither Sin, nor need of Pardon.

Secondly, From the Nature of the Law. This holy Law, whereof we speak, was founded in the Nature of the Law. *Secondly, From the Nature of the Law.*

of God ; the Rules and Precepts delivered in it, being a Transcript and Copy of God's eternal and essential Perfections. Hence the new Man, which is renewed and made conformable to the Divine Law, is said to be *created after God, or after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness*, Ephes. 4. 24. compar'd with Colos. 3. 10. And Persons so renewed, are said to be *Partakers of a divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. i. e. *Partakers of his holiness*, Heb. 12. 10. *Changed into the image of the Lord*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *To have put on Christ, and to be followers of God*. Because being made conformable to his holy Law, they do in that respect resemble the Author of it ; for the Religion prescribed in it, consists for the most part in a Resemblance and Imitation of God himself : As Sin and Wickedness is a Degeneration from him, and his Image of Holiness and Purity, which at first he enstamped on the Soul of Man, so true Religion and Piety restores and forms us again, after the Similitude and Likeness of God. And to this purpose, are those frequent Exhortations in the Scripture, *To be holy, as God is holy ; To walk in the light, as he is in the light ; and to purifie our selves, as he is pure ; and to be perfect, as he is perfect*. Not that we can be equally holy, pure, or perfect, with our Maker ; but that we should endeavour, according to the Capacity and Measures of a Man, to imitate and resemble him, in his most perfect Holiness and Purity ; still cleansing our selves more and more, from all Filthiness, both of Flesh and Spirit. Which Consideration is of very great Concernment in the present Question, and in several others relating to the Obligation of the Moral Law ; because it shews that our Religion, prescribed in it, is no arbitrary thing, or issue of an unaccountable Will, but founded in the very Nature of the eternal and immutable God ; and consequently, is in it self indispensable and unalterable, as having an unchangeable Foundation in God's own eternal and essential Purity. *Grot. on Mat. 5. 17.*

'Tis the Image and Resemblance of God in Man ; a Beam of his Holiness ; an Emanation from that eternal Light, in which there is no Darkness at all ; an Idea and Representation of the Divine Purity, in
which

which there is no *Variableness*, or *shadow* of *Change*. God's Commands (excepting some few of positive Institution) are no more than bare Declarations of his Will; for he doth not impose, or require Obedience to them, merely to shew his Authority, and exercise his Dominion over us; but because he loves the things wherein that Obedience is required, as most suitable to his own Perfections, and most becoming our rational Nature: Therefore he enjoins all that is holy, just and good, because he approves and loves it; and therefore he forbids all that is evil and unjust, because he dislikes and hates it. For, as I said before, his Moral Precepts are the Transcripts of his Attributes, or the *eternal* Dictates of the Divine Nature, communicating it self to Immortal Spirits: So that Conformity to them, is a Conformity to God himself, an Imitation and Resemblance of his Divine Perfections; who by declaring his Will, hath revealed his Nature to us, with a Design to repair his own Image of Holiness on our Souls. *God is Love*, 1 John 4. 8. therefore he requires us to follow him as dear children, by walking in love, Ephes. 5. 1. He himself is *merciful*, and therefore requires us to be *merciful likewise*, Luke 6. 36. He is a *God of peace*, Rom. 15. 33. and therefore requires us to live in peace, 2 Cor. 13. 11. *Even as much as in us lieth, to live peaceably with all men*, Rom. 12. 18. He himself is *pure* and *holy*, and therefore requires us to purifie our selves, as he is pure, 1 John 3. 3. And to be *holy*, as he is *holy*, in all manner of conversation, 1 Pet. 1. 15. He is *just*, and therefore requires us to do justly, Micah 6. 8. and provide things honest in the sight of all men, Rom. 12. 17. He is *good* and ready to forgive, Ps. 86. 5. therefore requires us to forgive one another, even as he for Christ's sake hath forgiven us, Ephes. 4. 32. His Goodness, in some respects, extendeth to all men, even to his enemies, Rom. 5. 10. Mat. 5. 45. Accordingly, he requires us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us, Mat. 5. 44. In all which, and the like Commands, God himself is an Example to us, and requires no more, than that we would imitate and follow him, and so be
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the *Children of our Father which is in heaven*, Mat. 5. 45. In some measure like to him in Love, Mercy, Justice, Holiness, Patience, Kindness; doing wrong to no Man, and doing good to all Men, as Opportunity and their Need shall require. So that in giving these Laws to the World, God did not dictate any thing at random, or in an arbitrary manner, only to shew his Dominion, and make known his Authority and Power over us; for his Commands proceed from his own essential Properties and Perfections, which are always the Rule and Measure of his Will, and what he can no more contradict, than he can deny himself. And this might be the Reason, why the Jews reckoned the Law for one of those three things, which (they say) were elder than the World; the *Messias* and Repentance being the other.

Thirdly,
From the
Nature of
Man.

Thirdly, This Divine and Holy Law, is founded also in the Nature of Man, as created after the Image of God; the Rules and Precepts of it, being the very Dictates of right and uncorrupted Reason. And tho' in this lapsed State, the Light of Reason is much obscured, by the Mists and Clouds of carnal and corrupt Affections, so that those holy Principles, which were written on Man's Heart by the Finger of God, are less clear and legible than at first: Yet still they are discernible to free and unprejudiced Minds, and will forever approve themselves to the best and purest Reason of all Mankind. We approve them as soon as we hear them; and we approve them too even when we break them, for that Check, which Conscience gives us for our Sins, is an Approbation of those holy Laws which we transgress. Even the carnal and unbelieving Jews, who *dishonoured God by breaking his law, approved the things that were more excellent, being instructed out of the law*, Rom. 2. 18. *For a carnal man, who is sold under sin, (if he consult his Reason, and not his Lusts) must needs consent unto the law that is good*, Rom. 17. 14, 16. There are Principles of Morality, no less evident than those in Geometry; for I am not more certain, that the Whole is greater than a Part, or that all the Parts are equal to the Whole, than I am, that to reverence, love, and worship Almighty God, to honour Parents, to

be thankful to Benefactors, to protect the Innocent, to relieve the Miserable, and to do unto others, as I would be done unto my self, are things morally good; and that the contrary Vices, such as to curse or blaspheme God, to invade the Rights of other Men, to oppress the Poor and Needy, and to shed innocent Blood, are morally evil: These and the like things, will even force Assent from common Reason, and therefore have generally been received in all Nations. To call them in question, because some particular Persons have been so brutish as to deny them, (having brought themselves into a preternatural State) is the like absurdity, as to doubt whether the Sun shines at Noon, because some do shut their Eyes and will not see it. However, *Wisdom will be justified of all her Children*, not only in some particular Instances, but in that general Affirmation, *Prov. 8. 8. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness, and there is nothing froward or perverse in them.* Accordingly, the Psalmist taking an impartial Estimate of them, according to the Dictates of his own Reason, made these ingenuous Acknowledgments, *I esteem thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way, Pl. 119. 128. Thy testimonies which thou hast commanded are exceeding righteous, v. 138. And again, v. 144. The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting.* For the things that God hath commanded are unchangeably, and therefore everlastingly good and righteous. Which things being duly considered, it will be impossible to conceive, how Man, being a rational Creature, can ever be exempted from that Law, by which he is naturally bound, to declare his Subjection to his Maker. For as our absolute and entire dependance on him as his Creatures, infers a natural Subjection to his Will; so being assured of his Will, not only by the express Declaration of it in his Word, but by the natural Equity of the things required in it, their Agreeableness to the natural Notions of a Deity, the Frame and Constitution of our rational Souls, and Condition in the World, 'tis utterly impossible we should be discharged from the Duties of Obedience to him; the Obligation to it being natural and indispensable,

pensable, and constantly proclaimed by the Voice of common Reason ; as will farther appear in the next Particular. For,

Fourthly,
*From the
Nature of
the things
which are
enjoin'd, or
forbidden.*

Fourthly, This Law of God is founded in the very Nature of the things themselves, that are enjoined or forbidden in it, and therefore cannot be changed, or abolished, any more than the very Nature of Good and Evil. 'Tis manifest as Light it self, that the things which it forbids, are of themselves, and in their own Nature, intrinsically Evil, and therefore to be hated, and avoided for their own intrinsical Baseness ; and the things which it enjoins, are in themselves, and their own Nature Good, and therefore to be loved, and chosen, for their own intrinsical Worth and Excellence. Take any Example, instance in any Vertue, and Reason will prefer it before any opposite Vice ; which Reason is a natural Law, the Dictates whereof, agree with the Commands of God, *and shew the work of the Law, to be written in our hearts, Rom. 2. 15.* Upon these Grounds, 'tis justly pleaded, that the Law of Nature is unalterable, eternal and indispensable ; for being naturally what it is, it cannot be otherwise. That which is in it self good, and fittest to be done, can never be otherwise under the same Circumstances, in which it is so ; and that which in it self is evil and unjust, will be always so ; And therefore the Law, which is founded in the Nature of things, must be everlasting, or of perpetual Obligation, it being equally as unchangeable, as the Nature of the things themselves, which are called Good and Evil, whilst Vertue is Vertue, and Vice is Vice ; *i. e.* whilst the natural, unchangeable, and eternal Reasons of Good and Evil, Just and Unjust, continue, this Law must necessarily remain in force, and can never be abrogated, or laid aside. The Force of this Argument, depends upon the common Sense of all Mankind ; for that there are natural and unchangeable Reasons, for the distinction of Human Actions into good and evil, just and unjust, is visible unto all Men. Who is there, that has the use of Reason, but may clearly see, yea, who, but must be forced to acknowledge, that Lying and Stealing, Murther and Adultery, Fraud, Rapine and Oppression,

sion, are vile and evil Actions? And that to do Justice, and love Mercy, to speak the Truth, and observe the Rules of Temperance and Chastity, are excellent, and praise-worthy? The Nature of these things, is visible from the intrinsecal differences of Good and Evil, apparent in the things themselves: So that besides the Commands of God, the very Nature of the Duties which he requires of us, is an Obligation to Obedience; which is one Reason why the Law whereof we speak, is commonly called *the Law of Nature*. By this it very plainly appears, that Vertue and Vice are more than Names, or the Issues of arbitrary Constitutions, either of God or Man: For tho' it be true, that Men have made Laws for the Publick Good, and that their Laws have not only been various, according to the Manners of the People to which they were given, but often changed too, according as the Times and Circumstances required; as *Carneades* of old observed, *Lactant. lib. 5. c. 17. p. 404.* Yet it will not follow, that there is no natural Right, as he vainly argues, forgetting his own former Distinction, between Natural and Civil Justice, *p. 406.* Neither is there here any such difficulty, as that *Cicero* need have passed the same Objection unrefuted, (when urged by *Furius* against *Laelius*) as *Lactant.* says he did: For the general Voice of Human Nature, the common Principles of all Mankind, condemn some things as naturally evil in themselves, and approve the contrary Vertues, as naturally good and eligible, before them. So that we must necessarily acknowledge, that Vertue and Vice, are not arbitrary things depending merely on Authority, whether Human or Divine; but that there are natural, eternal, and unchangeable Reasons, of the Distinction and Difference we put between them, when we call the one Good, and the other Evil; and that those Reasons are manifest and apparent, in the Differences of the things themselves. He that sees not a difference between Vertue and Vice, between Debauchery and Temperance, Justice and Injustice, Chastity and Uncleaness, Charity and Malice; or discerns not the Reason why the first are called Good, and the other Evil, must be
void

void of common Sense, as well as Reason : For that the Goodness of the one, and the Evil of the other, depends not on the bare Pleasure of Authority, but inheres in the very Nature of the things themselves, the common Sense and Experience of all the World, doth plainly witness. Tho' therefore such Laws may be repealed and changed, which are made upon Pleasure, or depend upon Reasons, which Time and Circumstances may alter ; yet those which are founded on the unalterable Nature of things, on the intrinsical Differences of Good and Evil, inseparably inherent in the things themselves, are as unalterable, as the unalterable Nature of the Good commanded, and the Evil forbidden in them : And that the very Nature of that which we call Virtue, or Holiness, is in it self unalterably Good ; and the Nature of that which we call Vice, or Wickedness, unalterably Evil, is no less evident to our Understandings, than those mathematical Principles ; for the reception of which, no more is required, than the bare understanding the Terms. For he that doth but understand what is meant by Virtue, and what by Vice ; what by Good, and what by Evil, hath most clear and uncontrollable Evidence to convince him, that Vice is evil, and Virtue good ; naturally, and in themselves, without regard to any external Laws, or Constitutions made concerning them : For 'tis the intrinsical Goodness of Virtue, and Evil of Vice, which was the reason of all external Laws, given for the Encouragement of the one, and Restraint of the other ; which makes it very plain, that they were antecedently Good, or Evil in themselves.

*Cannot say
that the o-
riginal
Law is still
in force.*

But for all this, we cannot safely say, without due Explication, that the original Law is still in force ; for 'tis plain, that the Strictness, Rigour, and Severity of the Law, is much abated by the Gospel. The great Question therefore is not whether the Law be still in force or not, which may with truth be either affirmed or denied in different respects ; but the Question is rather to be formed thus ; How far, and in what Sense ; and to what Effects and Purposes, that Law is now in force, since the Confirmation of the Gospel Covenant ?

In

In answer thereunto I shall shew,

First, Negatively, how 'tis not in force.

Secondly, Affirmatively, how far 'tis yet in force, and will continue so to the end of the World.

First, In the Negative we may lay down these following Concessions.

I. That since the first Promise of Christ in Paradise, and of the Mercy promised through him to fallen Man, the Rigour of the original Law of Innocence is much abated; so that it continues not in its full and primitive Force, or in that utmost Strictness and Severity, in which it was imposed in the State of Innocence, when the only Condition of Life was perfect and perpetual Obedience, and the Penalty of Death became unavoidably, upon any one particular Transgression. The Threatning is not now remediless, as once it was, and as it would have been, had there been no Overtures of Mercy through Christ; but is made avoidable by the Law of Grace. And therefore,

II. The original Law is not now so in force, as it was in the Interval between the Fall of *Adam* and the first Promise of Christ, when the Threatning was past into a Virtual Sentence, and no Remedy was allowed to prevent or avoid Execution; for since the Promise of Christ, and of Pardon to penitent Believers, the Severity of the Law, which threatned Death upon the first Transgression, is very much abated, there being a Remedy propounded to escape the Execution; and therefore,

III. No Man is now under the original Law, so fully as *Adam* was, before the Covenant of Grace was establish'd; that is, not so under the Law, as to be under it alone; not so, as to have no Benefit or Relief by the Gospel; the Threatning of the Law is not now so peremptory, nor the Penalty threatned so remediless, as once it was. The Law, or Covenant of Works, exacted unflinching Obedience to all its Precepts, and promised no Mercy or Pardon to Offenders; but now there is Mercy offered through Christ, who hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us; and therefore none are so under the Covenant of Works, but that if they believe

believe and repent, they shall have Mercy, by Vertue of the Covenant of Grace: Tho', as shall be afterwards shewn, the Curse, or Threatning of the Law, still continues so far in force, as to make the Penalty due for every Sin, yet that Penalty is not irremediable, the Promise of the Gospel being a Remedy at hand to dissolve its Obligation, and to release the Sinner from the Punishment due unto him for his Sins: Which Release or Pardon by the Gospel, will then be valid and effectual, when by Repentance, and Faith in Christ, a Man is truly qualified and prepared for it.

IV. It plainly follows, that no Man is under an absolute and unavoidable Necessity of Condemnation by the Law, so long as God invites him to Repentance by the Mercies of the Gospel: Whilst Patience waits, and Mercy offereth Pardon, there's hope for the most Guilty to escape, in case he repent in time, and sue out his Pardon, before the Season of Grace is past. Being under Grace, he is not yet irrecoverably abandoned a Sacrifice to Justice, unavoidably to suffer the Wrath to come; for the Gospel containing a conditional Grant of Pardon, notwithstanding Men's Transgressions of the Law, and consequent Subjection to its Curse, their Case is not desperate, but intermixt with Hopes of Mercy, the great Encouragement to amend, and endeavour to get out. The contrary Doctrine must leave them without Hope, under final Desperation, utterly forsaken of God, like the Devils in a remediless Condition.

V. By the Gospel we are immediately freed, not only from a Necessity of Damnation by the Law, but also from a Necessity of Performing that now impossible Condition of Life and Happiness, which is, or at least was once, required in the Law; for whereas the Law required exact and perfect Obedience, as the only Condition of Life; the Gospel promiseth Pardon and Life, on the easier Terms of Faith and Repentance, and Continuance therein unto the end: By which it evidently appears, that by the Mercy of the Gospel, we are delivered (tho' not from the Duty of Obedience) yet from the primitive Necessity of that

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Exactness and Perfection, which was required in the Law of Innocence. The Gospel or Covenant of Grace, supposes us Sinners, guilty and obnoxious unto Death, and so incapable of obtaining Happiness upon Terms of Law, or the Covenant of Works; proposing new and easier Terms, suitable to our present lapsed Condition, in which it would be impossible to be saved, unless God had been graciously pleased, for the sake of Christ, to abate of the Rigour of his original Law, and admit us to Repentance and Pardon. And this I conceive is that which some do mean, who tell us, *abrogata est Lex non quoad Obedientiam, sed quoad modum Obedientiae*, Chemnitius: That the Law is abrogated not in respect of Obedience in general, but in respect of that perfect and exact Measure of Obedience, which is required in it. For tho' it be very improper to call this an Abrogation of the Law, yet it's very plain, that (the Law continuing unrepealed) the Gospel offereth Pardon for our Transgressions of it, upon Repentance for them, and eternal Life upon Perseverance in sincere Obedience for the time to come; which being short of that Perfection required in the Law, makes it manifest, that we are freed from the Rigour of its preceptive part, requiring perfect and unsinning Obedience, as the necessary and indispensable Condition of Life; as well as from the Rigour of the comminatory part, threatening Death upon every failure, for the Reason is the same of both.

VI. By the two last Particulars, it farther appears, that now under the Gospel the Law is not in force, as the only Rule of Life and Death; *i. e.* we are not so under the Law, as eternally to stand or fall upon our Obedience, or Disobedience to it. The Voice of the Law is, *Do this, and live*, Rom. 10. 5. *and cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, that are written therein to do them*. Gal. 3. 10. But we are not to live, or die eternally, on these strict and legal Terms; therefore not so under the Law, that our Justification or Condemnation should depend upon it alone. The Gospel being a Covenant of Mercy and Grace, not exacting such strict Terms of Life and Happiness, which were exacted in the Covenant

of Nature and Innocence. That original Covenant did not promise Life, but upon the Condition of perfect and perpetual Obedience ; and threatned Death, upon every the least Transgression, or departure from perfect Innocence, not allowing any Relief or Remedy by Repentance. But the Gospel, tho' it gives no Leave or Toleration for us to sin, yet having sinned, it allows us to repent ; and on that Condition promises, *that our Sins shall be blotted out* : So that we shall be tried by these Terms of Grace, for Life or Death eternal. This and no more, is that which some do mean, who plead for an Abrogation of the Law, as a Covenant of Works ; for they grant that there is a Law still in force, requiring perfect Obedience under the Penalty of eternal Death, (some calling it the original Law, others calling it the Law of Christ, supposing the moral part of the original Law of Nature, to be taken into the Law of our Redeemer) but they deny it to be in force as a Covenant of Works, promising Life to Sinners, upon Condition of perfect Obedience ; *i. e.* upon Condition of not being Sinners, when they are already such, and threatning Death unavoidable upon every failure. And the Reason of their Denial is plain, and cogent, there being a new Law of Grace established in the Blood of Christ ; whereby the Rigour of the first Law is so abated, that a Sinner, tho' condemned by it, may obtain a Pardon, and so avoid the Execution, upon the breaking off his Sins by Repentance, and return to sincere, tho' imperfect, Obedience.

VII. It follows, by way of Consequence, that we shall not be judged, *i. e.* either justified or condemned at the last Day, upon Terms of Law and strict Justice, but upon Terms of Grace and Mercy, according to the Tenor of the Gospel : For *God having committed all judgment to the Son*, John 5. 22. *Having given unto Christ all power in heaven and in earth*, Mat. 28. 18. *Having appointed him to be judge of quick and dead*, Acts 10. 42. 2 Tim. 4. 1. we may be confident, that his Judgment or Sentence will pass not according to the original Law of Innocence, by which no Son of *Adam* can be saved ; but according to his own

own Law of Grace, which he purchased and sealed with his Blood. For as the contrary Opinion is inconsistent with the Covenant of the Gospel, so we are expressly told in it, *that we shall be judged not by the Law of Works, but by the Law of Liberty, which is the Gospel, or Law of Grace*, James 2. 12. And again, John 12. 48. *The words that Christ hath spoken, the same, saith he, shall judge us at the last day*

Neither can there be any reasonable Doubt, to a serious and considerate Christian, but that the Gospel, and not the original Law, shall be the Rule of eternal Judgment, by which Men shall be finally justified, or condemned. For that none shall be justified in Judgment by the original Law, is manifest, because they cannot; it being impossible for any Man to be justified by that Law, which he hath often broken. That the Faithful shall not be condemned by it, is likewise evident, because they are acquitted and pardoned by the Grace of the Gospel; otherwise (as shall be shewn hereafter) 'tis not to be denied, but that the Law it self condemns them, and that they are obnoxious to Condemnation by it, as is supposed in their Pardon by the Gospel; but being pardoned by Gospel Grace, they are thereby freed from the Condemnation of the Law. And 'tis farther manifest, that Unbelievers and Impenitents, who have rejected the Counsel of God concerning their own Salvation, shall consequently be condemned, not so properly because they have transgressed the Law, but because they have abused the Grace of the Gospel, because they have not *believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*, John 3. 18. or because they have not received the Remedy, by which they might have been freed from the Condemnation of the Law. From all which 'tis very clear, that the Gospel is the Rule, by which all that ever heard it, shall be judged in the great Day of Tryal: That the Question then will not be, whether we have kept or broken the first Law, which exacted perfect Innocence; but whether we have performed, or not performed the Conditions of the Gospel, which are Faith and Repentance, And accordingly, the final Sentence, determining the everlasting State of all Men,

will be passed, not according to the original Law of Creation, but according to the new and gracious Law of Redemption, which was established in the Blood of Christ, upon the Account of his Satisfaction for our Violations of the former.

The Sum of all is this, that whereas the original Law, given in the State of Innocence, required personal, exact, and perpetual Obedience to all its Precepts, as the only indispensable Condition of Life and Happiness; and *curst* every Offender, *who continued not in all things contained therein, to do them*; Christ hath redeemed us from that *Curse* of the Law, and established a new Covenant of Mercy and Grace, wherein he offereth Pardon of Sin, and eternal Life, upon the reasonable Conditions of Faith and Repentance, and that which will necessarily follow from them, hearty and sincere Obedience: By which new Covenant, we were immediately, and *ipso facto*, delivered from the Necessity of performing the now impossible Condition of Life and Happiness, required in the Law of Works; and of suffering the eternal and destructive Penalty threatned in it, in case of Disobedience, being admitted to Terms of Mercy, suited to our lapsed State.

But all this, which hath hitherto been granted, will by no means amount to an Abrogation of the Law; for the clearing whereof, I am now in the *Second place*, to shew Affirmatively how far 'tis yet *How far the Law is in force, notwithstanding the Mercy of the Gospel, yet in force* or Covenant of Grace. And that the Law (I still speak of the moral Law) is not abrogated, may appear in general,

I. Because Abrogation is properly an annulling of the Law; and where that is nulled, or repealed, its Obligation wholly ceaseth, according to the Saying of *Grotius de Satisf. p. 5. 7. Lex abrogata vim nullam habet obligandi*: All Obligation of a Law is utterly destroyed by the Abrogation of it: For being abrogated, it no longer binds either to Obedience, or Punishment for Disobedience. But here the Case is very different; for tho' the Rigour and Severity of the divine Law, be abated by the Gospel, the Obligation of it is not wholly voided and destroyed; for

as God, by becoming our Redeemer, ceased not to continue our Creator, but his Right of Creation continued with his Right of Redemption, so by establishing his new Law of Grace, he did not repeal or abrogate the original Law of Nature, but leaving it in force, so far as was consistent with his Designs of Grace, he superadded the other to it, as a Relief and Remedy to fallen Man, whereby he might be restored to his Favour, and recover the Happiness which by Sin was lost: So that the primitive Law is not repealed, or changed, only there is a new one full of Grace and Mercy joined with it. Our Condition indeed is much changed, but not the Law; for tho' the guilty Sinner, who hath deserved Death, and is condemnable by that Law, may not only be favoured, but fully pardoned, and freed from Condemnation; yet the Alteration is not made in the original Law, but in the Person's State and Relation to it, by reason of the Remedy afforded in the Gospel, and his Interest therein. Being qualified for Pardon according to the Terms of the Gospel, he is acquitted from Condemnation by the Law; but the Law it self is not abolished, but still continues the same, unaltered and unalterable, (as is plain from the Account given of it before;) only our State and Condition, under the Gospel, is not such, as that we must stand or fall in Judgment, upon those strict and legal Terms, which are become impossible.

II. There are several Texts of Scripture which very plainly tell us, that the Law is not abrogated, or made void, but rather confirmed, and establish'd by the Gospel; but these you have had already.

III. It was necessary that the moral Law should be continued in its utmost Latitude and Extent, (consider'd as a Law, not as a Covenant of Life) for had there been any Abatement in its Precepts, that which was Sin before, would then have ceased to be Sin, or any Fault at all. Again, had any Sin, or degree of Sin, been excluded from the Threatning, it would have been accounted a Toleration, or Leave, to commit it without danger.

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IV. Christ our Mediator was to obey it perfectly, and to die as a propitiatory Sacrifice to expiate our Transgressions of it. Taking upon him the Nature of Man, (the same as it was at first created) he must needs be subject to the Law; which was from the beginning written in his Heart, He being also to die for our Violations of it, which would have been needless, had the Law been abrogated, and wholly laid aside. But the Obedience and Sufferings of our Redeemer, plainly declare the great Esteem and Value, which Almighty God set upon his Holy Law, and how careful he was to preserve the Honour of it in the World: And this should be a perpetual Admonition unto all, never to slight or undervalue it.

V. This Law was originally written in the Heart of Man, and in force before the Fall; since which, there is no sufficient Reason to repeal it: The only Reason that can be pretended, is our Weakness and Inability to perform exact Obedience to it; but this (tho' it prevailed with the Goodness of God to provide a Remedy) is no sufficient Reason for an Abrogation of his most wise and holy Law; for we are still Men, capable of being renewed by his Grace. And God also intended, to afford us Help and Grace, through Christ, to recover us out of our lapsed State, and by degrees to bring us to that Perfection, which was lost. It was necessary therefore, that the same Law, or Rule of Perfection, which was given to Man in the State of Innocence, should afterwards be continued, because lapsed Man must endeavour to return to his primitive Integrity; and this shall be done at the end of the World, when *this Corruptible, shall put on Incorruption; and this Mortal, put on Immortality*: And that Saying compleatly be fulfilled, That *Christ shall present unto himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing; and when it shall be perfectly holy, and without blemish*, Ephes. 5. 27. In the mean time, 'tis very reasonable, that we should do what we can, endeavouring to come up to the Perfection of the Law, and not that the Law should stoop to the Imperfection of Men; for as that was possible to uncorrupted Nature

in the State of Innocence, which is now impossible to us; so that which is now impossible to corrupt and depraved Nature, will be possible to Nature, renewed and fully restored to the Purity designed in Heaven; and therefore the Law is not simply impossible.

VI. To dispatch the present Argument, by summing up what hath passed: This holy Law, which is thus founded in the Nature of God, and the Nature of Man, and in the Nature of the things themselves, which are enjoined or forbidden in it, being a perfect and compleat Rule of Righteousness, can require no less than exact and unsinning Obedience to its Precepts, agreeable to the original Righteousness or Holiness of God, and the Copy or Image thereof in Man, considered in his first and perfect State: As also to the Nature and Quality of the things required or forbidden in it; for every Law requires perfect Obedience to it self; so far as any thing is not required by it, so far 'tis not a Law, nor the thing a Sin; *for sin being a transgression of the law, where no law is, there is no transgression*, 1 John 3. 4. Rom. 4. 15, 16. And the Foundations of perfect Righteousness, required in the original Law of God, being unalterable, such Righteousness it self must needs be unalterably required, as being a Conformity to eternal and unalterable Truth and Goodness. So that it is a vain and frivolous Demand to ask, whether this Law be abrogated, or no; since an Abrogation of it is impossible, whilst these unchangeable Foundations of it remain unchanged.

This being so clear and uncontrollable a Demonstration, of the continuing and perpetual Obligation of the Moral Law, it may seem superfluous to add any more; for I have proved not only that the Law is not abrogated, but that 'tis not capable of Abrogation, the Contents of it being such, as can never cease to oblige, whilst God is God, and Man continues a rational Creature, related as a Subject to his Maker. 'Tis the *Law of Nature, written in the Hearts of Men, even those to whom the Scripture was never revealed*, Rom. 2. 15. As the things

commanded in it, were commanded because they are good in themselves, and their own Nature, so the things forbidden in it, are forbidden because evil in themselves, and their own Nature, antecedently to any external and expressly promulgate Law. If there had been no external Promulgation of it in the Scripture, Blasphemy, Idolatry, Murder, Adultery, Fraud and Oppression, would have been Sins justly punishable, as the Violations of that common Reason, which is essential to Mankind.

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still Obligatory.*

For these Reasons, I doubt not but this original Law of Nature, continues Obligatory even in its primitive Purity and Perfection, and is so to be interpreted and understood, when we find it promulgated in the Scripture, whether more obscurely by *Moses* and the Prophets, or more plainly and explicitly by Christ and his Apostles; for tho' (as I shew'd before) God in Christ hath provided a Remedy, against its Rigour and Severity, yet he hath not freed us from its Obligation to Duty and Obedience, or from Danger of Punishment, in case we sin against him.

*For what
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However, 'tis readily acknowledged, that the Design of God, in the external Promulgation of this holy Law, was not to revive, or keep on foot the first Covenant of Works, made with Man in the State of Innocence, when able to have observed it; or to tell us, that we must eternally live, or die, on Terms of this strict Law and Justice; or that we should have no easier Conditions of Life and Happiness, than perfect and unfinning Obedience: For as that is impossible to Men, who are already Sinners, so it's contrary to all the Revelations of God's Grace and Mercy towards Man, in all Ages of the World. His Design therefore, in promulgating this holy Law, in its fullest Purity and Perfection, was for other Ends and Purposes, which will be specified in the next Particular; for there are many necessary Instructions contained in it, and many good Uses and Advantages to be made of it under the Gospel, as,

First, The Law, in its highest Purity and Perfection, is useful to discover to us, the absolute Holiness and unspotted Purity of God, that none might

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ever think him such a one as themselves, an Approver, or Abettor, of their Sins in any measure; but that all being possessed with right and worthy Apprehensions of his Majesty, might thence be induced to *purify themselves as he is pure*, 1 John 3. 3.

Secondly, To make us sensible of our degenerate Condition, and humble us in the Sight of God; to let us see how miserable and unhappy we are in ourselves, and how vain it is to expect Relief upon Terms of Law and Justice, that *every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World appear guilty before God*. And this is the use which St. Paul makes of the Law, Rom. 3. 19. Gal. 3. 22. Even as David had done before, when he said, *enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*; i. e. If God should be extreme, to mark what he hath done amiss, and deny him mercy and pardon for his faults, Pl. 143. 2. It follows that the Law is therefore useful,

Thirdly, To shew us our Need of Christ, and set forth the Riches and Glory of the divine Grace, and Favour towards us, through him; for by discovering to us our Guilt and Misery, the Law awakens us to seek after Christ, the only Remedy, and makes his Gospel appear (as indeed it is) worthy of all Acceptation. And in this sense, I conceive, Christ is said to be *the end of the Law*, Rom. 10. 4. and *the Law to be our School-master, to bring us unto Christ*, Gal. 3. 24.

Fourthly, To excite us to Care and Diligence, in performing the Conditions of the Gospel, that we may be pardoned and accepted in the Beloved; nothing but Condemnation being to be expected from the Law, which we have so often broken.

Fifthly, To prevent all proud and arrogant Conceits, of our own Worthiness and Merits; for considering the Latitude and Extent of the Law, and our manifold Deviations from it, whatever Progress in Holiness we have made since our first Conversion unto God, we cannot, in strict Justice, challenge a Reward; as for other Reasons, so particularly for this, because in many cases we stand in need of Par-

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don. But many and great Inconveniencies would follow, should we suppose the original Law abrogated, and its Obligation to Obedience taken off; for the expiatory Vertue of our Saviour's Passion, and the Grace of the new Covenant, would by this means be much diminished and obscured, pharisaical Pride and Self-Confidence would encrease, and all Care to grow in Grace, and go on towards Perfection, would be accounted needless, by such as could persuade themselves, that they had performed the Conditions of the Gospel; and a Foundation would be also laid, for the groundless Conceits of venial Sins, and Works of Supererogation; i. e. of doing more than God in any Law requires of us.

Sixthly, To discover our own Weakness and Infirmary, and convince us of the Necessity of God's Assistance, in the Performance of our Duty to him, and so to make us constantly pray for, and depend on, the Aids of Heaven; without which we can do nothing that is acceptable to God. *Lex docendo & jubendo, quod sine gratia impleri non potest, homini demonstrat suam infirmitatem, ut querat demonstrata infirmitas salvatorem à quo sanata voluntas possit, quod infirma non potest*, August. Ep. 140. The Law by teaching and requiring that Obedience, which without Grace Man is not able to perform, discovers to him his own Infirmary, that being convinced of it, he may seek a Saviour, by whose Grace the Will being renewed, may be able to perform that Duty, for which it was unable of it self.

Seventhly, To excite our Endeavours to grow in Grace, contend after Excellency, and press forward towards Perfection, by striving still to grow better and better, from one degree of Goodness to another. Our Nature is such, that in this World we shall be always capable of Improvement. It was requisite therefore, that we should live under such a Law, that would never suffer us to be idle, or to sit down and say, *our Work is done; It is now enough*, as if we had nothing to amend, or were already as perfect, as we hope to be in Heaven. Had there been no Law in force, requiring greater Perfection,

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than the most Holy here attain, their Aims and Endeavours after farther degrees of Holiness, would have been at an end; but the Law being (as the Psalmist speaks) *exceeding broad*, Pl. 119. 96. requiring the utmost Purity and Perfection, that is attainable by the human Nature, sanctified and assisted by the divine Grace, no Man, that is compounded of Flesh and Blood, ought to think himself perfect, or incapable of farther Growth and Increase in Goodness; but as long as he lives in this World, will always have cause to be earnest in his Prayers, and diligent in his Endeavours to grow in Grace, as not being yet arrived at that Height and Perfection of Purity, which the Law requires, tho' he be at that lower degree, which God for Christ's sake will mercifully accept. And this is no small Advantage, which we receive from the most absolute Purity and Perfection of the Law; which by commanding the highest degree of Holiness, that is attainable by us, will be a constant and perpetual Incitement, while we live in this World, still to go on towards Perfection, and never to content our selves with any degrees of Vertue and Goodness, short of that highest Degree, to which we shall be advanced in Heaven.

And lastly, the Law, by stirring us up to such a continued Progress and Growth in Grace, serves to qualify and prepare us for greater degrees of Glory. For God will reward every Man according to his Works; which implies, that the degrees of Happiness hereafter, shall be proportioned to the degrees of Holiness here. Tho' all the *Righteous shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars, for ever and ever*, Dan. 12. yet there may be a difference between them, even as *one Star differeth from another Star in glory*, 1 Cor. 15. 41. And this difference may arise from the difference of Capacities in the Vessels of Glory, which shall all indeed be filled in the Ocean of Celestial Bliss; but they will receive the most, whose Capacities are most enlarged, by the Improvement of Preparing Grace. As therefore the Law requires the most exact and perfect Obedience from us, so the Goodness of God, the Law-Giver, encourages us to aspire

aspire after it, in hope of receiving a more glorious Reward ; for what was said in one particular Case, holdeth true in general; *He that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully*, 2 Cor. 9. 6. i. e. The more Good we do in this Seeds-time of Grace, the greater Reward we shall receive in the Harvest of Glory : It being the good Pleasure of God, to observe this Proportion, in the Dispensation of his Eternal Rewards.

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P A R T. II.

WHen Man had sinned, and thereby brought *A Redeem-*
himself into a State of Misery, God in *er promi-*
Mercy promised a Redeemer, to save us *sed.*
from our Sins, and restore us to his Favour. And of
this *Salvation he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets,*
which have been since the world began, Luke 1. 70.
Moses foretold in the Wilderness, *that God would raise*
up a Prophet like unto him, Deut. 18. 18. Job called
him *his Redeemer,* ch. 19. 25. And David called him
his Lord, Ps. 110. 1. And Solomon tiled him *the De-*
light and Wisdom of God, Prov. 8. By Isaiah he was
foretold, not only as the Restorer of the preserved of
Israel, but as a *Light unto the Gentiles,* and *Salvation*
to the end of the earth, II. 49. 6. By Jeremiah he was
termed the *Lord our Righteousness,* Jer. 33. 16. By Eze-
kiel, *a Prince and Shepherd of his people,* ch. 34. 23, 24.
By Daniel, *the Most Holy, who should finish transgression,*
make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting
righteousness, ch. 9. 24. By Hosea, *David their king,*
whom Israel should seek, and fear the Lord and his good-
ness in the latter days, ch. 3. 5. In which Days, it
was also foretold by Joel, *that the Spirit of the Lord*
should

should be poured out, and that in mount Sion and Jerusalem there should be deliverance, Joel 2. 28, 32. And by Amos, that the Tabernacle of David that was fallen, should be raised up, and built as in the days of old, ch. 9. 11. By Obadiah, that upon mount Sion there should be deliverance, and holiness, v. 17. And by Jonah's being in the belly of the Whale, was typified the Continuance of our Deliverer in the Grave. Micah foretold, that he should be ruler in Israel, and that his goings out have been from of old, from everlasting, ch. 5. 2. and concludes, that God would perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which he had sworn unto our fathers from the days of old, ch. 7. 20. Nahum said, Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, ch. 1. 15. And Habakkuk, that the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, ch. 2. 14. Zephaniah, that men should worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen, ch. 2. 11. And that with a pure language they should call upon his name, and serve him with one consent, ch. 3. 9. Which Words cannot be better interpreted, than of the Days of Christ; of whom Haggai also spake, ch. 2. 6, 7. yet once a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the desire of all nations shall come. Zechariah bad the People welcome him with joy, ch. 9. 9. rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass. And Malachi, the last of the Prophets, closeth up the Old Testament with a Prophecie of Christ; unto you that fear my name, shall the son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings. Besides these, there were other Promises, wherein it was particularly told, not only of what Nature he should be, but of what Nation, Tribe, Family and Person; yea, out of what City, and precisely at what time, he should come. His Nature was told to Adam in Paradise, that he should be the Seed of the Woman, Gen. 3. 15. And again, unto Abraham, Gen. 12. 3. in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And more particularly in what Line, Gen. 21. 12. in Isaac shall thy Seed be called. Accordingly, the Promise made before to Abraham, was renewed to Isaac, Gen. 26. 4.

in thee and thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Accordingly, this promised Seed, which the Apostle interprets to be *Christ*, Gal. 3. 16. hath his particular Nation again foretold, Numb. 24. 17. there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel. And Jacob himself foretold his particular Tribe, in that propheticall Speech unto his Sons, Gen. 49. the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, v. 10. In this Tribe of Judah, the Promise was afterward confined to the Family of David, Ps. 89. 36. his Seed shall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me. Which Words, since they cannot be verified in any other, must needs be meant of Christ. *Isaiah* foretold the very Person of whom he should be born, ch. 7. 14. behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son. *Micah* named the very City, or place of his Birth, ch. 5. 2. but thou Bethlehem Ephratah, tho' thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. And *Daniel* set the very time; namely, about the end of 70 Weeks: That is, 490 Years in our Account, commencing from the going forth of the Commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, Dan. 9. 24, 25. So evidently was our Saviour promised of the Seed of Abraham, in the Line of Isaac, of the Posterity of Jacob, of the Tribe of Judah, and the Family of David; to be born of a Virgin, in the Town of Bethlehem, towards the end of Daniel's 70 Weeks: About which time the Angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph, shewing how all these Prophecies should shortly be fulfilled; and this Saviour, who was promised in Paradise, expected by the Patriarchs, figured in the Law, and foretold by the Prophets, should be manifested to the World; and that he should be born of a Virgin, his then espoused Wife; bidding him not fear to take unto him Mary his Wife, for that which is conceived in her (said he) is of the Holy Ghost: and she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his Name Jesus; for he shall save his People from their Sins. Where we have a particular Designation of the Person of our Redeemer.

But

Expected
both by
Jews,

But before I speak any thing of his Person, I think it proper to take Notice by the way, that this was done at a time wherein he was expected, both by Jews and Gentiles. For the Jews, it was easy to collect from the Prophecies of *Jacob* and *Daniel*, that the Fulness of time was then at hand, the Scepter being departed from *Judah*, when *Herod* the *Idumean* became their King, and *Daniel's* 70 Weeks of Years, being near an Expiration. Accordingly, we read not only of *Simeon*, that he waited for the Consolation of *Israel*, *Luke* 2. 25. but of many others, *Luke* 23. 51. that they also looked for redemption in *Jerusalem*. And that they looked for the Redeemer in their own Days, is evident enough from the Words. Hence that Inquisitiveness of the doubting Jews, that sent Priests and Levites from *Jerusalem* to *John the Baptist*, to ask him, Who art thou; supposing he might have been the *Messias*, *John* 1. 19. For *Luke* 3. 15. all men mused in their hearts of *John*, whether he were the *Christ* or not. And afterwards they flockt to *Jesus* himself, saying, how long dost thou make us doubt? if thou be the *Christ*, tell us plainly, *John* 10. 24. For of him 'twas usually said, is not this that Prophet? From which Questions it appears, that the *Messias* was more attentively expected in those Days, even by the Unbelieving Jews, than ever before, or since. And this general Expectation, made them so easy to be deceived by the false Pretences of *Theudas* and *Judas Galileus*, who drew much People after them, *Acts* 5. 36, 37.

And Gen-
tiles.

This Expectation of the Jews, was dispersed among the very Gentiles; for they also had strange Imitations of an universal King, that was to be born in *Jerry* about that time, as appears from the Testimonies of their own Writers. *Suetonius* in *Vesp.* c. 4. *Cicero*, l. 1. *Epist.* 1. & l. 2. de *divinat.* *Virgil* *Eclog.* 4. *Tacitus*, l. 21. and l. 4. and by *Josephus* the Jew; who says it was written in open sight, upon the chiefest Tower in *Jerusalem*, de *Bell. Jud.* lib. 7. c. 12. From whence, but especially from the Scriptures when translated by the *Seventy*, it might well be dispersed throughout the World. I need not speak of the Prediction of *Balaam*, which might continue in his Nation; nor of the Prophecies of the *Sybills*; or the

the Instructions of *Zoroaster*, left to the succeeding *Magi*; by which, *Phragius* says, the wise Men of the East, mentioned *Mat. 2. 1.* understood the Meaning of the Star, that led them unto Christ.

It being thus made evident, that he was expected both in the Jewish and Gentile World about this time, let us in the next place come to his Appearance. And here we shall find it a very good Observation of learned Men, that God hath always appeared in a manner suitable to the Design of his Appearance: He appeared to *Moses* in a burning Bush, which nevertheless was not consumed by the Fire, to signify, that notwithstanding all the Oppression of his People in *Egypt*, they should not be destroyed, but preserved (like the flaming Bush) by his almighty Power, *Exod. 3. 2.* To *Joshuah* he appeared as an armed Man, or as a Man with his Sword drawn in his Hand, to assure him, that he would protect and fight for *Israel*, against their enemies the inhabitants of the land of *Canaan*, *Josh. 5. 13, 14.* At the Deliverance of the Law from *Sinai*, he appeared with Signs of Majesty and Greatness, with Thunder, Lightnings and Tempest, to strike the greater Awe into the People, and make them more observant of his Law, delivered to them in that terrible manner, *Heb. 12. 18.* On the Apostles the Holy Ghost descended in the appearance of Cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, as coming to inspire them with fervent Zeal, and give them Utterance to preach the Gospel in all Languages, *Acts 2. 3, 4.* So when Christ appeared unto *Paul*, to turn him from his Errors, and to make him his Minister and Witness among the Gentiles, to open their Eyes, and turn them from Darkness unto Light, he gave a manifest Token of his Design, in the manner of his Appearance; for he caused a great Light from heaven, above the brightness of the Sun, to shine round about him, and them that journeyed with him, *Acts 26. 13, 18.* But of all the Appearances of God to Men, which we read of in the Scripture, as there was none more wonderful, so there was none more suitable to the Design of it, than the Incarnation of his eternal Son; for then his Love and Kindness towards Man most eminently appeared, when the Word, the same eternal

*What is
meant by
the Incar-
nation of
the Son of
God.*

Word, which in the beginning was with God, and by whom all things were made, John 1. 23. was himself made flesh, and dwelt among mortal men, full of grace and truth; and they beheld his glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father. Here is the Incarnation of the Son of God; the Evangelist plainly telling us, that the Word was made flesh, which is elsewhere expressed by being manifested in the flesh, 1 Tim. 3. 16. being made in the likeness of man, Phil. 2. 7. in the likeness of sinful flesh, Rom. 8. 3. and by taking part of flesh and blood, Heb. 2. 14. forasmuch as the children (even those whom he came to redeem) were partakers of flesh and blood, He also took part of the same. This taking part of Flesh and Blood, being made Flesh, or in the likeness of Men, I call the Incarnation, because that is the Word commonly used by the Church (as the most fit and proper) to express this great Mystery whereof we are speaking: And I call it the Incarnation of the Son of God, because the same Word that was made Flesh, is presently stiled the only Begotten of the Father; and therefore cannot be meant of any other, than of that eternal Word, which in the beginning was with God, and which was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made, that was made, v. 1, 2, 3. But of this there cannot be any reasonable doubt; for that by the Word, which was made Flesh, is meant our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and second Person in the blessed Trinity, is so manifest, that it needs no other Proof, than the bare reading of the Chapter. All that is needful to be made the matter of any Question, is,

*Why the
second Per-
son in the
Trinity is
called the
Word.*

First, Why the second Person in the blessed Trinity, is called the Word.

Secondly, How, and in what sense, he was made Flesh.

First, In answer to the first of these, several Returns have been made, according to the different Significations of λόγος, in the Greek Tongue. For,

*I. He is
called the
Internal
Word, or
Reason,
to repre-
sent to us*

I. Since it does not always signify an external Word, pronounced by the Lips, but often signifies Reason or Wisdom, the internal Word, or Offspring of the Mind, it hath not improbably been thought, both by ancient and modern Writers, that the

the Evangelist made Choice of this Term, on purpose to confirm our Faith in the eternal Generation of the Son of God, and Co-essentiality with the Father, in opposition to the Heresie of *Cerintus*, who denied it, and against whom this Gospel was written, at the Request of the Bishops of *Asia*; as we are told by *St. Jerome*, (*in Catal. Script. Eccl.*) *Epiphanius* (*Her. 51.*) and others. Nor is λόγος, as it signifies Reason or Wisdom, an unfit Title, to shadow forth unto us the eternal Generation of the Son of God, the Distinction of Persons, and yet his Co-essentiality with his Father; for

1. Tho' a Man's Reason be the Issue and Offspring of the Soul, yet there was no time, wherein the Soul was wholly destitute of it: So the Son, tho' begotten of the Father, is co-eternal with him; neither was there any moment in Eternity, in which the Father was the Father without the Son. *The Eternal Generation of the Son of God.*

2. As Reason is distinct from the Soul, so is the Son of God from his Father, who are distinguished by their personal Properties: So that the Son is not the Father, nor the Father the Son, tho' essentially the same. *The Distinction of Persons, and*

3. As Reason is inseparable from the Soul, so is the Son of God from the Father; who, tho' they are distinguished, cannot be divided. *John 14. 10. I am with the Father, and the Father in me.* Accordingly, *Ignatius* (*Epist. ad magn.*) says, he was the Word of God, & ἐν τῷ ἀλλὰ ἐκ τῷ ὁμοίου, not a Word spoken, but his essential Word. And for this Cause he is not styled τὸ ῥῆμα, an outward Word, which is spoken and may be heard; but ὁ λόγος, in a more sublime and eminent Sense, to express unto us, in some measure, by a Term agreeable to our Capacities, that the Son of God, from Eternity, was born of God the Father, as our prime Conceit, which is our mental and inward Word, issueth out of the Understanding. *His Co-essentiality*

I might here have been more large, for not only the School-men, but the Fathers before them, have often made it their business, to illustrate and explain this Mystery of our Faith, concerning the eternal Generation of the Son of God, by an Act of Intellection, or Understanding in the reasonable Soul. But,

II. Because there are other Reasons, why Christ should

II. The External Word, or Speech, because Christ be was

be called the *Word*, and those more obvious and easy to be understood, I shall choose rather to insist on them; and these respect a second Signification of *λογος*, which is usually rendred Word or Speech.

The Word promised of old. 1. Christ might not unfitly be called the *Word*, because promised of old, and foretold by the ancient Prophets, who, before his coming, bore witness of him. God's Promise being often called his *Word*, and the Promise of the *Messiah* being the great and principal Promise, on which all other Promises and Blessings did depend, no wonder that the Evangelist made choice of this Title; especially when the Seventy Interpreters, who at *Alexandria* translated the Bible into Greek, made use of the same, to express the Promises of God, *Pf.* 105. 5. 119. 78, 45, 65, 74, 76. and *Pf.* 130. 1. Nor do we in English call a Man's Promise his Speech, but his *Word*; see *Ham.* on *Luke* 1. *Annot.* b.

The Person by whom all things were made. 2. As Men act by their Words, great Men especially, who have Power to cause their Commands to be obeyed, so the Father doth all things by his *Son*, *Heb.* 1. 2. *By him he made the worlds; all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made,* *John* 1. 3. Where the Evangelist alludes to the Creation, described *Gen.* 1. it being his purpose to shew, that God redeemed the World by the same *Word*, by which he created it at first.

The express Image of the Father. 3. Christ might be called the *Word*, because as Words are the express Image and Representation of the Conceptions of our Mind, so is he *the brightness of his Father's glory, and express image of his person,* *Heb.* 1. 3.

The Revealer of his Father's Will. 4. As Words are also the Interpreters of the Mind, serving to make it known to others, no Man being able to know our Minds but by our Expressions, whereby we use to discover them; so Christ is the great Interpreter and Revealer of his Father's Will: Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him, *Mat.* 11. 27. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, *John* 1. 18. In which last Words 'tis thought by some, that the Evangelist explains the Reason, why Christ

Christ is called the *Word*; that is, the Revealer of his Father's Will; and by him the Father speaks unto us. For the same Reason, 'tis thought that Title is likewise used 1 *John* 5. 7. where we read, *that there are Three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.* For tho' the mention of the Father immediately before, may seem to require that the second Person should be thence called the Son, yet St. *John* speaking of him as a Witness bearing Testimony unto us, he chooseth rather to stile him the *Word*. So *Rev.* 19. 10. speaking of the Testimony of Jesus, addeth in *verse* 13. that his Name is called *the Word of God*; not obscurely intimating, that his declaring to us his Father's Will, was one Reason of his being called the *Word of God*. Yea, 'tis farther yet observed, that St. *John*, who alone among all the Evangelists and Apostles stileth Christ the *Word*, never useth that Title, but when he speaks of him as the Interpreter of his Father's Will; for even in the first Chapter of his Gospel, he calleth him the *Word*: As for other Reasons, mention'd before, so particularly for this, Because he was to speak of his Incarnation, and dwelling among us in a Tabernacle of Flesh, to reveal the Grace and Truth of the Gospel, which was but shadowed in the Law of *Moses*, v. 17. Accordingly it follows, *no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosome of the Father, he hath declared him.* For which Reason, he is not unfitly stiled the *Word*, and elsewhere the *Word of God*, he being the great Prophet of the Church, of whom all the other Prophets bore witness, and by whom God speaks unto us in a most eminent manner, and to whom we are commanded *to hearken in all things, whatsoever he hath said unto us,* *Acts* 3. 27. Yea, 'twas the Judgment of many of the Ancients, that God spake unto the Church by his Son from the beginning of the World; for *Justin Martyr*, *Clemens of Alexandria*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, and others, do all agree, that God spake unto the Patriarchs and Fathers of old, by the same Person, by whom, when incarnate, the Gospel was intended to be published in the latter Age. For the Angel, who spake unto the Fathers, and represented Almighty

God, and had the incommunicable Name of God given to him, and was worshipped and adored by the Fathers before the Law, was anciently, and is still most probably thought, not to be a created Angel, but the very Son of God, the second Person in the blessed Trinity; sometimes called the *Angel*, or *Messenger of the Covenant*, Mal. 3. 1. Who was pleased even then to vouchsafe those Appearances unto holy Men, as *Preludia* Prefaces, or Preambles to his following Incarnation, or Appearance in human Flesh; and for that Reason was called the *Word of God*, as being always the prime and great Revealer of his Father's Will, tho' he used the Ministry of his Prophets, as afterwards of the Apostles, for the Publication of it.

The Messiah was expected under this Title.

In what Sense he was made Flesh.

By God's being manifest in the Flesh, we understand that

Lastly, to conclude this Particular, I might have saved all this Pains by telling you, that the *Messiah* was expected by the Jews under this Title, as learned Men have observed out of the *Chaldee* Paraphrase, and the Writings of *Philo* the Jew; and consequently that *St. John* spake in the usual Stile and Language of his Nation, when he called him the *Word*.

Secondly, How, and in what Sense, he was made Flesh.

I. That God was manifest in the Flesh, is a Truth plainly revealed in many Texts of Scripture; wherein we read, *that he, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, was made of the seed of David according to the flesh*, Rom. 1. 3, 4. *That God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. 8. 3. (Gal. 4. 4.) *That he took part of flesh and blood, and was in all things made like unto his brethren*, Heb. 2. 14, 17. *That he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God: made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*, Phil. 2. 6, 7. *That he who is over all, God blessed for ever, came of the fathers as concerning the flesh*, Rom. 9. 5. And that the eternal Word, who in the beginning was with God, and was God, by whom all things were made; was himself made flesh, and dwelt among us, John 1. 1, 2, 3, 14. These, and many other parallel places, sufficiently assert, that God was manifest in the Flesh. And is as clear from other Texts,

II. That

II. That by God we are to understand the second *The second Person in the Trinity* Person in the sacred Trinity; that is, the eternal Son of God; who, tho' he be of the same Essence with the Father, and therefore truly God, is yet in respect of Personality, distinguished from him, *who sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. So that it was not God the Father, but God the Son, that was manifest in the Flesh; as the Ancients largely proved against the wild Heresy of *Praxus* and *Hermogenes*, *Noltus* and *Sabellius*.

III. By Flesh we are (by an usual Synecdoche of *Was made the Part for the Whole*) to understand the human *Man* Nature, or the whole Nature of Man, consisting of Soul and Body, in the like Sense, as when we read, *that all flesh shall see the salvation of God*, Luke 3. 6. That by the deeds of the law, *there shall no flesh be justified*, Rom. 9. 20. Gal. 2. 16. That God *will pour out his Spirit on all flesh*, Joel 2. 28. That unless those Days of Affliction, spoken of in *Mat. 24.* should be shortned, *no flesh should be saved*, v. 22. For since by *Flesh*, in these and other places of the Scripture, *Man* is apparently understood, it will be very reasonable so to understand it also here. And therefore,

IV. When the Son of God is said to be manifest in *So that he the Flesh*, the Meaning is, that he was made in the *was God* likeness of Men, Phil. 2. 7. That he took part of flesh and Man and blood, and was in all things made like unto his brethren, Heb. 2. 14, 17. That he came in the likeness of *son, sinful Flesh*, or assumed the human Nature into the Unity of his Person; so that he who was perfect God, was also perfect Man, of a reasonable Soul, and human Body subsisting; truly God, of the Substance of the Father; begotten before the Worlds, and truly Man, of the Substance of his Mother, born in the World.

Hence it is, that he is sometimes called *God*, John 1. 2. and sometimes called *Man*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 21. Sometimes the *Son of God*, and sometimes the *Son of Man*; because he was really and truly both *God*, of the same Essence with his Father, and *Man* of the same Nature with us, being in *all things made like unto us, sin only excepted*, Heb. 2. 17. 4. 15. By which, we may answer that Question of his unto

the Pharisees, concerning the *Messias*, upon their affirming him to be the *Son of David*, Mat. 22. 45. If *David call him Lord, how is he (then) his Son?* for he was *David's Lord* according to his Godhead, *Psf. 110. 1.* and yet *David's Son*, being *made of the Seed of David, according to the flesh*, Rom. 1. 3, 4. For the understanding whereof we need only consider, that there were in him two Natures, united in one Person: A Similitude whereof (tho' an imperfect) we have from our selves; for as the reasonable Soul and Body is one Man, so God and Man is one Christ, and Christ the true *Immanuel*; which being interpreted by the Evangelist himself, signifies God with us.

I think it needless here to tell you, how many Heresies anciently arose concerning this Mystery, to the great Disturbance of the Church; for 'tis better to bury them in Silence, than revive the Memory of them, since they have been long exploded: I shall only mention one Passage, which will be useful both to make us cautious, and to fix in our Memories the Doctrine of the ancient Church; and 'tis concerning *Eutiches*, who in the Council of *Ephesus* had bravely defended the Unity of our Saviour's Person, against the Heresy of *Nestorius*. He himself fell into another Error, and was a while after condemned in the Council of *Chalcedon*, for affirming, that there was in Christ but one Nature. Against both which Heresies, the Orthodox maintained two Natures, (*ἀρρεπτος καὶ ἀσυγχύτως*) without Change or Confusion, united in one Person; (*ἀδιεργετὸς καὶ ἀχωρίστως*) without Division or Separation. Nor is this a needless

The Necessity of believing that there are two Natures in the Person of Christ.

Curiosity, but a fundamental and necessary Truth; for to divide his Person, is to make two Christs; i. e. Two Mediators between God and Man; whereas the Scripture plainly affirms, that there is *but One*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. Besides, it would make the Scriptures unintelligible, when it so often affirms such things of one and the same Person, which cannot belong to one and the same Nature; as that the *Word, who in the beginning was with God, and was God, by whom all things were made, should himself in time be made Flesh, and dwell amongst mortal men*, John 1. 1, 2, 3, 14. and at last die upon the cross, and purchase the Church with

with his own blood, Acts 20. 28. For as these and the like Texts cannot well be interpreted, without acknowledging a Diversity of Natures, in the Person whereof they speak; because as God, he could not die, and as Man, he could not make the World, so neither will that alone suffice, without acknowledging the Unity of his Person, in whom these diverse Natures are conjoined; for otherwise, such different Properties could not be ascribed to him; that is, he who was God, could not be said to shed his Blood, because in the divine Nature there's no such thing; nor he, who was Man, to make the World, that being a Work far above all human Power, unless the same Person were both God and Man; *i. e.* unless the divine and human Nature were united in the Person of whom such things are affirmed. Again, as we must not divide his Person, so we must not confound his Natures, as if both of them were compounded or united into one, or either of them changed into the other; for 'tis clear, both from Scripture and Reason, that after the Incarnation both Natures remained perfect and entire, really distinct by their respective and essential Properties, tho', by reason of the intimate Union of them in the Person of our Saviour, there is oftentimes a Communication of them in the Scriptures.

As it would be tedious, so I suppose it needless, here to recount all that hath, or may be said, in defence of this mysterious Truth, and shall therefore only add, that to deny the human Nature of Christ, and assert only his Divine, is in effect to deny all possibility of his Death, and so to overthrow the Work of our Redemption, because as God, he is immortal, and in that Nature could not die. On the other side, to deny his divine Nature, and to assert his Human only, is to destroy the Value and Merit of his Death, with the Efficacy and Power of his Intercession, these being certainly derived from the Divinity of his Person. Either of these Fancies therefore is inconsistent with the Office of our Saviour; but being God, manifest in the Flesh, *i. e.* God and Man, both united in one Person, 'tis most apparent, that he is every way fit for
the

the great Office of a Mediator between God and Man.

Thus I have endeavoured briefly to explain, and that as plainly as the myſterious Subject will permit, in what ſenſe the Son of God was made Fleſh; which was not ſurely by any Change or Alteration in his divine Nature, which is unchangeable, but by aſſuming the human Nature into his perſonal Being, or Subſiſtence, ſo as to make but one Perſon; *i. e.* one Chriſt, one Mediator between God and Man: For tho' by becoming Man, he became what he was not before, yet being God, he ceaſed not to be what he ever was; but even then, when he *was made of a Woman*, Gal. 4. 4. deſcending from the Father's, as concerning the Fleſh, he remained *over all, God bleſſed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. And therefore moſt truly and properly was *God manifeſt in the Fleſh*, without any real Change, or Alteration at all in the Deity. And all that hath been hitherto ſaid, may, by an ordinary Capacity, be eaſily underſtood, by diſtinguiſhing of two Natures, Divine and Human, and both of them united in the one and undivided Perſon of our Saviour.

By thus diſtinguiſhing, many ſeeming Contradictions may be eaſily reconciled; as that the Son of God, who had a Being before the World, and gave Being to it, ſhould be born of a Virgin in the Days of *Augustus*. That he, *who was before Abraham*, John 8. 58. ſhould come after *John the Baptiſt*, Acts 19. 4. That he, *who Preached in the days of Noah*, ſhould begin to preach *in the days of Tiberius*; and being Eternal, ſhould at that time be about 30 Years of Age. That he, who was impaſſible, ſhould ſuffer. He, who was immortal, ſhould die. He, who was God, ſhould purchaſe the Church with his own blood, Acts 20. 28. All theſe and many like things, are undoubtedly affirmed of the ſame Perſon, without any Colour of Contradiction, if we conſider that he was *God, who was manifeſt in the Fleſh*. All the Difficulty is, concerning the Band of Union, or the manner how it was effected; for, as the other Article of the bleſſed Trinity, concerning three Perſons in one Nature, ſo this of the Incarnation, concerning two Na-

tures

tures in one Person, is a Mystery to be adored with Silence, rather than curiously pried into; 'tis happy for us that we are assured of the thing, tho' we cannot fully understand the manner. And if any shall hence take occasion to call this Mystery into Question, let him consider how far he is from understanding all the Secrets in the least Creature in the World, and he need not wonder that he cannot comprehend all the Mysteries concerning the Creator himself. Let Reason therefore here submit to Faith, since we cannot reasonably doubt of what God hath revealed in his Word; and when ye wonder at this Mystery of the Incarnation, wonder also that God should take such a wonderful and stupendous way for the effecting Man's Redemption.

Before I proceed any farther, I think 'twill not be amiss to lay before you, some of the many great and weighty Reasons of the Incarnation of our Lord, apparent in his several Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, which I shall endeavour to make plain, that as this great Mystery is full of Wisdom in it self, so it may appear most rational unto us; for the Reason why 'tis so much slighted and disregarded by the foolish World, is, because they do not understand the Reasons, and glorious Ends of God therein.

The Reason of Christ's Incarnation.

First, The Incarnation of our Lord, discovers the infinite Wisdom of God, in the Contrivance of our Redemption, in that the middle Person in the blessed Trinity, became our Mediator, and was manifested in the Flesh, that he might expiate our Sins in the same Nature, wherein we have sinned. His Person and his Natures, were every ways fit for his Mediator Office; for tho' he took part of Flesh and Blood, he did not at all partake in our Corruptions, he was by his miraculous Conception, free from original, and by his holy and unblameable Life, from any actual Sin; tho' he was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and in all points tempted like as we are, yet all this was without sin, Heb. 4. 15, for he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, 1 Pet. 2. 22. Now we, who had offended God, stood in need of such a Mediator, for he alone was fit to mediate for others, who himself never gave the least Offence; Heb.

It discovers the infinite Wisdom of God, in that the middle Person in the Trinity became our Mediator.

Heb. 7. 26. *such an high priest became us, who was holy, harmless and undefiled, separate from sinners.* And such a High Priest we have, who was never stained with any Sin, but became obedient unto Death, offering himself as a Lamb, without Spot or Blemish, a most acceptable Sacrifice for the Sins of the World. Again, besides his most perfect Purity, there were in him all other Requisites in a Mediator between God and Man, such as cannot be found in any other, no not in the blessed Angels themselves; for to which of the angels said he at any time, *thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*: And again, *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son*, Heb. 1. 5. Where the Apostle industriously demonstrates, the Dignity and Superiority of Christ, above the holy Angels of God: And this Dignity belonging to him, as the Son of God, was another Requisite in a Mediator between him and us; who else durst have interposed, to avert the Wrath of the Almighty, but He, *who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with him*, Phil. 2. 6. For had he not been God, his Dignity would not have been sufficient for such an Interposition, nor his Sufferings of so great a Value, as to be the Price of our Redemption; for tho' he suffered only in his human Nature, yet his Sufferings took their Value from the Dignity of his Person; the Divinity whereof, made his Death available for the Sins of his People. On the other side, it was requisite that he should take upon him the *form of a servant, and be made in the likeness of man*, v. 7. that as he was one in Nature with the Father, so he might be one in Nature with us, and in that respect fitted for all those Actions, which were necessary (in the human Nature) for our Redemption; and so *being God, made manifest in the Flesh*, that is, both God and Man, united in one Person, he was every ways fit for the great Office of Mediation between God and Man.

If we consider him as the Son of God, or second Person in the blessed Trinity, we may in that respect behold a Congruity, or Fitness for this gracious Undertaking; for who fitter to mediate for us with the Father, than his own beloved Son? Who more

fit than the Son of his Love, to interpose for us, who were the Children of his Wrath? Who fitter to make us the Sons of God by Grace, than he, who was his Son by Nature? Who fitter to create us anew, after the Image of God, than he, by whom all things were created at the first? Who fitter to plant and found that Faith, which we are to believe, and to settle the Minds of Men in an undoubted Persuasion of the Truth, than *the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father*, John 1. 18. *i. e.* nearest to him, and most dearly beloved by him, and best acquainted with his Will? *Lastly*, Who fitter to rule and protect his Church, by subduing all the Enemies thereof, than he, *by whom all things do consist*? Col. 1. 17.

Again, If we consider him as manifest in the Flesh, 'Twas necessary that we may yet see farther Cause, to admire and adore the infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God; for we being Partakers of Flesh and Blood, it was meet that for our Redemption, he likewise should take part of the same, *Heb. 2. 14.* that as Man was to be redeemed, so Man might pay the Price. Under the Law, the Right of Redemption belonged to a Brother, or one that was nigh of Kin, as appears by *Lev. 25. 48, 49. Ruth 4. 4, 6.* Even so must the Lord our Redeemer be made in the likeness of Man, *that in nature he might be our brother, near of kin unto us, Heb. 2. 11.* The Reasons whereof will appear in the several Parts of his Mediatorial Office. For,

First, He was to be a Prophet, and teacher of his People, such a one as should teach them by his Example, as well as by his Doctrine, and at last confirm his Mission by his Death; which he could not have done, had he not been Man, appearing in human Flesh. Besides, God is invisible, and no Man hath seen him at any time; *who dwelleth in light, which no man can approach unto, 1 Tim. 6. 16.* But when the Word was made flesh, he was visible unto all men, who beheld his glory; *the glory as of the only begotten of the father, dwelling among them full of grace and truth, John 1. 14.* When God delivered the Law from Mount Sinai, so dreadful was the Sight, that the People were amazed, and said unto Moses, *Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak*

Speak with us lest we die, Exod. 20. 9. Yea, *Moses himself exceedingly feared and quaked*, Heb. 12. 21. But when God sent his Son in our Flesh, he stooped to our Frailties, and condescended to our Weakness, *raising up a Prophet of our Brethren*, like unto *Moses*, in his Office, and in his Meekness, as well as in his human Nature, *whom we are to hear*, Acts 3, 22. For these Reasons it was meet that he should be manifested in the Flesh; and it was also requisite that he should be God, to give the greater Authority, and receive the greater Reverence, and more ready and dutiful Obedience to what he taught. And thus you see the Congruity and Meekness of our Saviour's Incarnation, in respect of his Prophetical Office.

Secondly,
As Priest.

Secondly; He was to be a *Priest*, for which Reason also it was requisite that he should be incarnate: Had he not been Man, he had not been near enough unto us to have suffered in our stead, nor really have suffered at all, being impassible as God. He took not therefore on him the *Nature of angels*, but took on him the seed of *Abraham*; and was in all things made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, Heb. 2. 14, 16, 17. Man had sinned, and the Justice of God required that Expiation should be made in the same Nature that offended; and therefore, both *he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one*, Heb. 2. 11. i. e. (as I conceive) as the Priest under the Law, who made an Attonement; (for so to sanctifie in this Epistle signifies, ch. 10. 10. ch. 13. 12.) And the People, for whom the Attonement or Reconciliation was wrought, were of one common Parent, of one Original, and so were Brethren one towards the other. In like manner, our great High Priest Jesus Christ, who offered himself a Sacrifice for our Sins, and we, for whom he was offered, are of one Nature; for which Cause, he is not ashamed to call us Brethren; and by that near Alliance to us, became a meet sacrifice for his Church, having a body prepared for a sin offering unto God, Heb. 10. 5, 10. And that in the same Nature that had sinned, tho' he himself had no Sin; and so as by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so

by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous, Rom. 5. 19. For God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh for sin, (or as the Words are elsewhere translated, a sacrifice for sin) condemned sin in the flesh, Rom. 8. 3. i. e. condemned it to Death, both in respect of its Guilt and Dominion, because he designed the Destruction or Abolishment of them, in the Sacrifice of Christ, in our Nature on the Cross. Which shews, that besides this his Alliance to us in the likeness of sinful Flesh, it was requisite, to his Priestly Office, that he should offer a Sacrifice for our Sins; for every High Priest is ordained of God, to offer Gifts and Sacrifices: Wherefore it was of necessity that Christ should have somewhat also to offer, Heb. 8. 3. (for the Words, tho' spoken of his Oblation in Heaven, suppose his foregoing Sacrifice on the Cross.) Wherefore when he cometh into the World, that is, when the Prophet spoke of his Manifestation in the Flesh, it was said, sacrifice and burnt offerings thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me, Heb. 10. 5. i. e. an human Nature, consisting of Body and Soul: For we are to include his Soul, when he is said to offer his body once for all, v. 10. as certainly, as we are to include his Body, when he is said to make his soul an offering for sin, If. 53. The Meaning thereof is, that since God would not accept of sacrifice and offerings, and burnt offerings and offerings for sin, which were offered by the law, v. 8. i. e. since they were of no Force or Vertue with him, as to the Expiation of the Sins of Men, so as to make the comers thereunto perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, Heb. 10. 1. therefore he was pleased, that a more perfect and divine Sacrifice should be slain; or that he, who had been hidden for many Ages, under those Types and Shadows, should appear, or be manifested in the flesh, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, Heb. 9. 26. (for 'tis the same Word used 1 Tim. 3. 16. not the same with that, Heb. 9. 24. and is opposed to the second Manifestation, v. 28.)

For the understanding of which, we must consider, that when Man had sinned, and so became obnoxious unto Death, the Penalty of the Law, which he had transgressed, God was pleased, out of his abundant

bundant Mercy, to admit a Mediator, to suffer equivalent Pains in his stead, that his offending Creature might not inevitably be condemned. And yet, tho' for the Glorifying of his Mercy, he was pleased thus to relax his Law, as to the manner of its Execution, and that Rigour, which peremptorily required the Offender himself to suffer, yet, for the Demonstration of his Righteousness, and Hatred unto Sin, and Preservation of the Authority of his holy Law, he would not remit, or abate, the Substance of its Demands; tho' he admitted a Change of Persons, he would not admit a Change of Penalties, or however, as little a Change as was necessary to the main Purposes of his Mercy; but required Sufferings, as near as might be the same, with that which he had threatened in the Sanction of his Law. These then our Mediator, and Surety, was to undergo; and therefore, besides all the inward Sufferings in his Soul, *must humble himself, and become obedient unto death, Phil. 2. 8.* For as Death was threatned, so Death must be inflicted, and without *shedding of Blood, there was no remission of Sins.* To this end, was he made a little lower than the Angels, (when he was made Man) that he, by the Grace of God, should taste death for every man, Heb. 12. 9. and through death, destroy him that had the power of death; i. e. the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject unto bondage, v. 14, 15. As he was God, he could not suffer; as he was immortal, he could not die; and therefore became he Man, that he might redeem us from this curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us, Gal. 3. 13. And thus ye see another, and that the principal, and a double Reason, why he was incarnate; that there might be a near Relation between him and us, and so Man might suffer, because Man had sinned, and the Authority of the Law be the more inviolably preserved; there being as little Alteration as might be, in the Execution of its threatening Sentence.

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mere Man, his Obedience had not answered the Ends of God in our Redemption, and consequently would not have been sufficient for our Ransome; but being God, manifest in the Flesh, was of infinite Value: So that his Merits were equal to the Purchase; his Satisfaction answerable to his Father's Justice; his Sufferings equivalent to the Exactions of the Law, not by a Socinian Acceptilation, (which ascribes little more unto them, than to the Legal Sacrifices) but by their own Dignity and Worth; for tho' his Pains were not eternal, yet they were equivalent to them, that which was wanting in continuance, being sufficiently supplied by the Extremity of his Sorrows, the Innocence and Holiness of his Life, and especially the Dignity and Excellence of his Person, *he being God, who purchased his Church with his own Blood.* For tho' he suffered only in his human Nature, yet that being united into one Person with his divine, gave an infinite Value and Esteem to all that he did, or suffered for us; for as the Greatness of an Offence is increased, according to the Dignity of the Person against whom it is committed, so the Value of the Punishment, that is suffered by way of Satisfaction, is to be esteemed according to the Dignity of the Person that undergoes it. Now as God is of infinite Majesty, against whom we have sinned, so Christ is of the same Divinity, who hath suffered, and from the Divinity of his Person, arises the Fulness of his Satisfaction. Hence *his Blood is called precious*, 1 Pet. 1. 19. Hence also *his Life was a sufficient Ransom for many*, tho' he in Person was but one, Mat. 20. 28. because that one was more valuable than all those Millions for whom he died. Consider who he was, & *dubium esse non potest quin pretii magnitudo superaret negotium*, Cyprian, Sermon. 16. and there can be no doubt, but the greatness of the Price did more than equalize the Purchase. Here again, we may learn to admire and adore the divine Wisdom, in this great Mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord; for had he been only God, he could not have suffer'd; and had he been only Man, he could not have satisfied. Most Glorious therefore was this divine and gracious Project, that God and Man

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should

should be so united, as to become one Person, that God might suffer, being Man; and Man might satisfy, being God. His personal Union justifies the Expressions.

II. *That he might by his Divinity support the human Nature.* II. 'Twas requisite he should be God, that by his almighty Power he might support the human Nature in bearing the divine Wrath, which was due to all those Sinners, for whom he suffered; for the Weight was too great, and the Burthen too heavy, for mere Man to have undergone it, as may appear to any that will consider what Sorrows it caused, what an Agony it produced, what Anguish it wrought in him, who had the Strength of the Deity to support him.

III. *That he might conquer Death.* III. It was necessary also that he should be God, that he might conquer Death, reassume his Life, and appear in Heaven for us. Man might suffer Death, but he could not overcome it: God could overcome it, but unless incarnate, could not suffer it. None but he, who was *Immanuel*, God with us, could do both; but he being Man, could suffer Death, the Punishment of our Sins; and in that he was God, could overcome Death, and do the Work of a perfect Saviour.

Thus ye have heard great and weighty Reasons of the Incarnation of our Lord, taken from the first Act of his Priestly Office, *viz.* the Oblation of himself a propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of Man. For to this end he must be Man, that he might be capable of Suffering in the same Nature wherein we had sinned; and he must be God, to give Worth and Virtue to his Sufferings, to support the human Nature under them, and to overcome the Power of Death, and to appear in the Presence of his Father, as our Advocate in Heaven. Which is a second Act of his Priesthood, and will yet discover farther Reasons of his Incarnation; for as it was requisite that he should be God, that he might effectually intercede, by representing the Merits of his most precious Blood, so it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be such an High Priest as had been touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been in all points tempted like as we, tho' without sin, Heb. 2. 17. *that having suffered himself, being tempted, he might,*

by his own experience, be more ready and willing, as well as able, to relieve and succour us, Heb. 2. 18. that we might have the more free access, and come more boldly to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace, to help in time of need, Heb. 4. 16. that when the dreadful Majesty of God affrights us, we might apply our selves to this Mediator, between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, who in our Nature is our Advocate with the Father; advanced to that Authority, that he is able to save unto the utmost, all them that come to God through him, since he ever liveth (in this our Nature) to make intercession for them, Heb. 7. 25. Such is the Majesty of God, that before him the very angels are said to cover their faces, II. 6. 2. how much more may sinful Man be amazed at his Greatness? Such is his infinite Holiness and Purity, that we could not hope he should look upon us without Indignation; and such is our Sinfulness, that we could not lift up our Hearts to him, without Shame and Confusion, had we not a Mediator to intercede for us, an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins, 1 John 2. 1, 2.

Thirdly and lastly, our Mediator was also to be a Thirdly, King, and the Head of his Church; and therefore As King, also it was requisite, that he should be God Incarnate. God, that he might effectually gather, govern, sanctify, and protect his Church, prospering his Cause against all Opposition of Satan and the World, that he might subdue all his Enemies, and bring them under his Feet; as also, that he might raise the Dead, judge the World, condemn the Wicked, reward and glorify his Servants, by changing their vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself, Phil. 3. 21. For these Acts of his Kingly Office, most certainly require divine Authority and Power. And on the other side, it was meet that he should be Man, that the Head might be of the same Nature with the Members, that hereafter he may visibly appear, when he comes to judge the Quick and the Dead. And so some understand those Words of his, John 5. 27. where he tells us, that the Father hath given him authority to execute judgment; because he is the

the Son of Man; that is, (say they) because he only of the three Persons in the Trinity is Man, that Men, who are visible, and to be judged as well as Angels, may have a visible Judge; and so may not only hear his Sentence, but also behold and see his Person, when he comes to render unto them according to their Deeds done in the Body.

But besides all this, his Incarnation is in the mean time a great Inducement to us, to submit unto his Government, and yield Obedience to him. It was the Argument of *Abimelech* to the Men of *Shechem*, Judges 6. 2. *remember that I am your bone and your flesh*. By this he endeavoured to persuade them to receive him for their King; and it prevailed with them, for they said, *he is our brother*, v. 3. The same Argument was afterward used by *David* to the Elders of *Judah*, in the Rebellion of *Absalom*, *ye are my brethren, and my bones, and my flesh*, 2 Sam. 19. 12. *And by this, he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man*, v. 14. What hard Hearts then have they, that will not be bowed by the same Argument from the Son of *David*? yea, from the Son of God? For after his Incarnation, he is not ashamed to call us *Brethren*; and by such familiar Expressions of Kindness, and Alliance to us, to invite us to obey him. How glad and ready therefore should we be to receive him for our Sovereign, and to cast off all Usurpers, and suffer neither Sin nor Satan to have Dominion over us? Surely there is no fitter Person to have the Government over us, for he is nearly allied to us; hath been touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities, and is therefore tender and compassionate towards us. He is also God, and therefore able to succour and protect us. We cannot question his Power, because he is Almighty. We cannot doubt of his Goodness, because it is infinite: And we must acknowledge his Authority, because he is our Maker; yea, and hath all Power in heaven and earth committed to him, even in his human nature, Mat. 28. 18. He hath also purchased a Right unto us by his Blood; how careful therefore should we be, *to glorify him in our souls and bodies that are his*? How readily should we receive and

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serve such a Lord and Master, in whom there are found such a great Variety of Arguments and Inducements, to persuade us to obey him? Reckon not those therefore useless and unnecessary Speculations, for surely God, who wrought such Wonders for us to glorify his Wisdom, Power and Goodness, his Mercy and Justice in the Person and Office of his Son, would have us take notice of, and observe them, that we may admire and acknowledge the Glory of all his Attributes, so illustriously shining forth in our Redeemer. 'Tis a great degree of Unthankfulness, after so great a Benefit, not to allow it any serious Thoughts, as if it were not worth our regard. If *the angels, whose nature Christ did not take upon him,* Heb. 2. *desire to look into these things, concerning man's redemption,* 1 Pet. 1. 12. their heedful Observation, may justly make us ashamed of our Negligence, and quicken us to a more diligent Enquiry into it for ever after. I have read of one, who for this Reason was tempted to wonder at the Work of Man's Redemption, "That God should so far condescend, as
 " to be incarnate, and make such glorious Discoveries of himself, and Kindness unto Man, and yet
 " so few in the World should take notice of it; and
 " he should have from Men so little of the Honour,
 " that by his Preparations he seemeth to expect. But that which satisfied him, may also satisfy any other under the like Temptation; namely, "That God
 " hath another World besides this, and other Creatures besides Man, in all likelihood incomparably
 " more numerous. He means the Holy Angels, to whom the Lustre of this Work of our Redemption, appears more clearly than to Man, since it was part of God's Purpose and Intent, *that to them might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God,* Ephes. 3. 10. Besides, the time will come, when Christ shall appear again, *to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe,* 2 Thes. 1. 10. Then shall we also more clearly see, the manifold Wisdom of God in this glorious Mystery: Then shall we have other kind of Thoughts and Apprehensions of it, than now we have. In the mean time, let us often meditate upon it, that we may live in Admiration

of it, and be always searching after God's Ends therein, desiring nothing more than the true and practical Knowledge of him, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

Having laid before you some of the Reasons of our Saviour's Incarnation, before I come to shew you his Ends therein, I pray take notice that all the Arguments and Inducements unto Piety, which are dispersed throughout the Gospel, receive Force and Strength from this Consideration, that the Author of our Faith, from whom we first received them, was God the Son, manifest in the Flesh. That which usually renders them ineffectual, is an evil Heart of Unbelief, not owning that divine Authority, which should awe Men into a due Regard. Hence the Apostle, in the two first Chapters to the *Hebrews*, so largely shews the Divinity of our Saviour's Person, and Dignity of his Office, to beget in us the greater Respect unto the Doctrine which he taught. *God (saith he) who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by his son, Heb. 1. 1, 2. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, Heb. 2. 1.* Where 'tis easy to perceive, the Force of his commending Argument; for as the Divinity of our Saviour's Person gives Worth and Authority to his Words, so 'tis a most strong and mighty Inducement to regard them, that they proceeded from the eternal Son of God, by whom he made the worlds, who being the brightness of his father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high; as the Apostle, *Heb. 1. 3.* goes on to declare his Dignity, that he might obtain from us the more earnest Heed unto his Gospel. For since it was delivered by so glorious and divine a Person; since God condescended to speak to us by his own eternal Son, what Heed and Attention should we give to the Doctrine that he hath taught in former Ages? He spake to his People by *his Servants the Prophets*, which he sent to declare his Will; but when he saw they

they were slighted, he said, *they will reverence my Son*, as in the Parable, *Mat. 21, 37.* and therefore sent his own Son, the only begotten who is in the bosom of the father, to declare him; i. e. to reveal his Mind to us, *John 1. 18.* What Force and Influence should this Consideration have upon our Hearts? for the Doctrine which he taught, is no earthly or human Invention, but descended from above, the Word and Truth of the omnipotent God, and delivered to us not by a Servant, or an Angel, or a Prince, or any of the Governours of the Earth, but by his Son, who is the Creator of all things; who made the Heavens, and concluded the Sea within its Bounds; whose Will the very Elements observe; whose Words the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and all Creatures in the Heights above, and the Earth beneath, are subject to, and obey; as *Iust. Mart.* of old to *Diognetus. Mihi, &c. p. 498.* I insist on this Argument the longer, because it is so often urged in the Scripture, and so mighty and potent to obtain Regard, were it duly considered, and laid to heart. Nor can it be despised, but upon the highest and eternal Peril; for as there can be no Cloak, or Excuse for Unbelief, to us, who have the Son of God incarnate for the Founder of our Faith, so 'twill be an Aggravation of their Sins, and increase their Guilt, who after all will not submit unto his Gospel. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, (the Son of God manifest in the Flesh) and was confirmed to us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the holy Ghost, *Heb. 2. 2, 3, 4.* In which Words the Apostle enforceth on us, the most earnest Heed unto the Doctrine of the Gospel, upon the score of its divine and glorious Author, as being delivered to us by no meaner a Person, than the Son of God, who appeared himself in human Flesh to declare his Will; and being appointed to be Judge of Quick and Dead, will come again to take account how it hath been regarded, and to render to every one according to their Deeds.

I. But I hasten to the main thing I design, and one main end of our Saviour's Manifestation, which was to take away our Sins, and to reform us, by furnishing us with Grace, to enable us to serve him in Righteousness and Holiness before him all the Days of our Life; for he came not only to avert his Father's Wrath, by the Sacrifice of himself, for the Expiation of our Sins, but also to convert and turn us from them, that God might have the Glory, as well as we the Benefits of his gracious Undertaking. Both these Parts of our Saviour's Office, are implied in his Name; for according to the Interpretation of the Angel, he was therefore called *Jesus*, because he was to save his People from their Sins. And indeed he saveth us from our Sins themselves, and from all the evil Consequents and sad effects thereof, from the Practice, from the Guilt, and from the Punishment of them; from all the Evil that is in Sin, and from all the Miseries that otherwise would follow it: For he is a perfect Saviour, and his Salvation is full and entire, tho' not compleated all at once, but by several degrees, at sundry times, and in divers manners.

Of this complete Salvation from our Sins by our Saviour Christ, the *Baptist*, his forerunner, also spake, when he said, behold the *Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the World*, John 1. 29. i. e. He takes away Sins, by pardoning of them when they are past, by assisting us against them for the time to come, and by bringing us at last to a Life, where we shall not be subject to them any more. In this latitude,

First, From our Sins themselves.
Secondly, From all the evil Consequents of them.

we are to understand our Redemption, or Salvation from our Sins; for he will redeem us, First, From our Sins themselves. And, Secondly, From all the evil Consequents of them: For to these two Heads all may reduced.

First, He redeems or saves us from our Sins themselves; i. e. from the Pollution, Practice, and Commission of them. For tho' Redemption from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, be evidently included, yet, as to any Effect on us, he beginneth the Work of our Salvation, in beginning to free us from our Sins themselves, like a wise Physician, who endeavours to remove the Causes of a Disease; and by removing

of them, to effect a perfect Cure. Our Sins were *We are de-*
the Causes of all our Miseries; and therefore one *liver'd*
great Design of our Saviour's coming, was to save us *from our*
from them. *Sins them-*

1st, By freeing us from the Power and Domi- *selves, by*
nion. *being freed*

2^{dly}, From the very Being and Existence of them: *1st, From*

The first he doth in this Life; the second he will do *the Domi-*

in the Life to come, when our Salvation shall be *2^{dly}, From*

completed, our Natures perfected, and we for ever *the very*

freed from the Possibility of Sinning. But, *Being of it.*

1st, I am to speak of the first of these, namely,
of our Salvation from Sin, as began in this Life in
our first Conversion unto God, and advanced by our
gradual Growth in Grace, and continued Progress in
his Ways; for there is nothing more evident, than
that, in this Sense, our Saviour came to save us from
our Sins, to save us (I say) from our Sins them-
selves; *i. e.* to cleanse us from the Filth, to wean us
from the Love, to free us from the Power, or take us
off from the Practice of them. So that 'tis plain,
that part of that Salvation which we expect through
our Lord Jesus Christ, is to be saved from the Thral-
dom and Bondage of a sinful and vicious Life: Take
notice that I only say, this is part of our Salvation
by him; for 'tis a Work consisting of many Parts,
and will not fully be accomplished, till he hath sa-
ved us from the Power of the Grave, by raising our
very Bodies out of their dispersed Dust, and delivered
us from all the Evils and Miseries, that our Sins hath
brought upon us. For he came to save us from our
Sins in the plain and literal Sense; that is, to con-
vert us from the Practice, as well as to free us from
the Guilt and Punishment of them.

The Evidence of this most certain Truth, written *That Christ*
as it were with Beams of Light, might save the Labour *came to de-*
of any farther Confirmation; but for the better im- *liver us*
printing of it on our Hearts, I shall prove it by the *from the*
concurrent Testimony of two unquestionable Wit- *Dominion*
nesses; I mean the old and the new Testament, both *of Sin, is*
of which plainly and frequently declare unto us, *evident,*
that one End of our Saviour's coming, was to turn us
from the Practice of our Sins, and work a Reformation
in the World.

I. This

I. From the Old Test. I. This is evident from the Old Testament, tho' not altogether so evident as from the New; for it's manifest that he was promised as a *Reformer*, who should come to work a Change and Reformation in the sinful World. To this purpose was that early Promise of Christ in Paradise, *Gen. 3. 15.* wherein it was foretold, that he should *bruise the Serpents Head*. For that Promise may not unfitly be interpreted by the Words of St. *John*, who tells us, *that the Son of God was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil*, 1 John 3. 8. For since by the *Seed of the Woman*, was meant the *Son of God*, incarnate of the *blessed Virgin*, no doubt but by *bruising the Serpents Head*, was meant his *destroying the Works of the Devil*, which the same Apostle interprets *to be the taking away our Sins*, 1 John 3. 5. of which more hereafter. For tho' there was a farther Meaning in that Promise unto *Adam*, reaching the Guilt and Punishment of our Sins, yet that it included the Destruction of our Sins themselves, cannot reasonably be questioned by any that considers the Event, which was more plainly foretold in the succeeding Promises of Christ. For that Promise unto *Abraham*, *Gen. 22. 18.* *in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, is by the Apostle interpreted of this Salvation, from the Practice of our Sins by our Lord Jesus Christ, *Acts 3. 26.* for speaking there of this Blessing promised in Christ, the Seed of *Abraham*, he tells us how that Promise was fulfilled, and wherein that Blessing doth in part consist, saying, *God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.* So that the turning of us from our Iniquities, or saving of us from our Sins themselves, was part of the Blessing promised so long ago to our Father *Abraham*. So *Zacharias* also interprets the *Holy Covenant*, and Oath which God swore unto him, *Luke 1. 74, 75.* for he giveth this as the Sense and Meaning of it, *that God would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.* This Text, *Luke 1. 74.* shews that the other, *Acts 3. 26.* is well enough translated, tho' the Greek will bear another Sense; but I shall hereafter have occasion far-

ther to clear these Texts of the New Testament, which I do but barely mention now, as the best Expositors of the Old; and we see by them that our Saviour was from the beginning promised as a Reformer of Mankind, who should turn us from our Sins, and reduce us to the Service of God.

Accordingly, by *Moses* he was foretold as a *Prophet*, who should make known the Will of God unto us, and to whom we should hearken (*i. e.* obey) in all things whatsoever he should say unto us, *Acts* 3. 22. out of *Deut.* 18. 19. And to shew the Necessity of Obedience to him, there was added this most fearful Commination, *Every soul that will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people*, *Acts* 3. 23. out of *Deut.* 18. 19. Nor was he only foretold as a Prophet, whose Doctrine we should universally obey, but as a King, *Pf.* 2. 6. and ruler of his people *Israel*, *Micah* 5. 2. whose Throne should be for ever and ever, *Pf.* 45. 6. Accordingly, we read that the government shall be upon his shoulder, *Is.* 9. 6. and that he should reign until all his enemies were made his footstool, *Pf.* 110. 1. *1 Cor.* 15. 25. That his arrows should be sharp in the heart of his enemies, whereby the people should fall under him, *Pf.* 45. 5. By which, was foretold the Power of his Word, sharper than a two-edged Sword; and the success of his Grace, in subduing the sinful Hearts of Men, and bringing them in Subjection to his spiritual Kingdom; so that even Kings should fall down before him, and all nations should do him service, *Pf.* 72. 11. And as for those that should refuse Subjection to his gracious Reign, there were before his coming, many terrible Denunciations of his Wrath against them, even against the greatest and most Potent of them; for so we read, that he should strike through kings in the day of his wrath, *Pf.* 110. 5. That he should be Judge among the nations, and rebuke many people, *Is.* 2. 4. That he should judge the people with righteousness, and break in pieces the oppressor, *Pf.* 72. 2, 4. That he should smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slay the wicked with the breath of his lips, *Is.* 11. 4. And that he should break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, *Pf.* 2. 9. Therefore it follows, by way of Admonition,

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kiss the Son (which was a sign of Subjection and Obedience) *lest he be angry, and ye perish*, v. 12. In Consideration of which Anger and Severity against obstinate and persevering Sinners, together with the Holiness required in his spiritual Kingdom, another Prophet, as soon as he had said *behold he shall come immediately*, subjoins, *but who may abide the day of his coming?* and *who shall stand when he appeareth?* for he is like a refiners fire, and like fullers sope. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness, Mal. 3. 1, 2, 3. Where the last Words shew, that the Prophet spake of our Saviour's first coming into the World, to purify and refine it, and not of his last coming into Judgment, as, by the Terror of the Prophecy, some may be apt to imagine.

And Daniel, speaking of the *Messias*, and foretelling his very time, said, that it was determined to finish transgression, and make an end of sin, as well as to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, Dan. 9. 24. In which place, as the making Reconciliation for Iniquity is to be understood of the Pardon of our Sins, and Justification of our Persons, so the other Phrases are as evidently meant of Conversion from our Sins, and Sanctification of our Natures. Correspondently it was foretold by other Prophets, that in the Days of the *Messiah* many People should go and say, *come let us go up into the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths*, II. 2. 3. That in mount Sion (the Type of the Christian Church) there should be holiness, Obad. v. 17. That the remnant of Israel should not do iniquity, Zeph. 3. 13. That they should fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days, Hof. 3. 5. That they should not hurt, nor destroy, in all his holy mountains, II. 11. 9. That all nations should come in, and walk no more after the imaginations of their own hearts, Jer. 3. 17. But that men should worship the Lord, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen, Zeph. 2. 11. That they should call upon his name, and serve him with one consent, ch. 3. 9. To this purpose, God promised to put his law into

into their inward parts, and to write it in their hearts, Jer. 31. 33. To put a new spirit within them, and take away the stony heart, giving them an heart of flesh (a soft and tender) that they might walk in his statutes, and keep his ordinances, and do them, Ezek. 11. 19, 20.

By this Description of the Days of the *Messias*, taken out of his Prophets, who foretold not only his coming, but the Design and Consequents of it in the World, we most clearly see, that he was promised as a Reformer, who should come to work a Change and Reformation amongst us, or, which is all one, to save and turn us from the Practice of our Sins. This is so evident, even from the Predictions of the Prophets, that the unbelieving Jews gather thence an Argument, to overthrow our Faith, of his being come in the Flesh; for when they consider the licentious Lives of some professed Christians, and the idolatrous Practices of others, they more confidently deny our Jesus to be the Christ, of whose Days the Prophets so often spake, when they foretold the Ruin of Idolatry, and Reduction of back-sliding Sinners, to the Worship and Service of God. And thus the Professors of Christianity, by their unchristian Lives, take part with the Jews, those avowed Enemies of Christ, and in effect deny his coming in the Flesh; for it is granted on both sides, that the Prophets foretold the Abolishment of Iniquity, and wonderful Flourishing of Peace and Holiness in his Days, which seems to be inconsistent with the many Wars, and Deluge of Prophaness and Impiety in the Christian World.

However, Christianity may stand unshaken in its own defence, notwithstanding all the Abuses of many that profess it; for the Doctrine of Christ, is a *Doctrine according to godliness*, 1 Tim. 6. 3. and *requireth every one that nameth the name of Christ, to depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 9. We need not therefore be so far offended with any Man's Abuse, as to think ill of that Religion, which we know him to transgress, for whatsoever Sins abound in the Christian World, Christianity allows them not; the *Grace of God, that bringeth salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, teacheth us to deny all ungodliness, &c.* Tit. 2. 12. So exactly did the Design of our Saviour answer to the

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II. *From
the New
Test.*

the Predictions of the Prophets, notwithstanding the contrary Practices of many that make Profession of his Name. To make this more fully appear, let us pass,

II. From the Old Testament to the New, for therein we shall more clearly see, that part of our Saviour's Office and Design, in coming in the Flesh, was to save us from the Dominion and Practice of our Sins, and work a Reformation in the World. For this Reason, the *Baptist*, his Forerunner, who came to prepare his way, prepared it by Preaching *Repentance, and amendment of life; forewarning men to fly from the Wrath to come, by bringing forth fruits meet for repentance*, Mat. 3. and *turning from the folly of disobedience, to the wisdom of the just*, Luke 1. 17. For this was the way to make ready a People prepared for the Lord, who himself also came to call Sinners to Repentance, as he tells us *Mat. 9. 13.* By the Preparation of the Embassador, we may judge of the Office of his Master; namely, that his coming was to turn Men from their Sins, since his Forerunner prepared his way, by exhorting them to Amendment. Not to insist on this, there are many other Texts, plainly declaring, that one great Design of our Saviour's coming into the World, was to work a Reformation in it, or to turn Men from their evil Practices, unto the Service of God; as it is written, *there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob*, Rom. 11. 26. Of which Deliverer St. Peter spake, *Acts 3. 26.* where he tells us, *that God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning every one from his iniquities.*

This was so evidently the Design of God, in sending his Holy Son into the World, that another Apostle saith, *ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins*, 1 John 3. 5. Where 'tis evident that the Apostle speaketh of our Sins themselves, in the plain and literal Sense, both because in the following Words he propounds unto us the Example of Christ, in whom there was no Sin, and also, because he was dissuading from the Commission of Sin, as being a Transgression of the Law, and consequently a Contempt of the Authority of God, as ye may see in the former Verse; for in pursuance of this Dissuasion,

from

from wilful and deliberate Sins, he tells us, that *we know that Christ was manifested to take away our sins*, and that as an Argument to persuade us to forsake them : For to refuse to part with them, when we know that our Saviour was *manifested to take them away*, is to do what in us lieth to frustrate the End of his Manifestation in the Flesh. Which Consideration must needs be of great force, with all that bear any respect unto his Name, to restrain them from all Indulgence to their sinful Lusts. Therefore the same Apostle a little after repeats this Argument again ; for having first insinuated another Motive against the Commission of Sin, as being an Imitation of the Devil, who sinned from the beginning ; he tells us the second time, that for this purpose *the son of God was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil*, 1 John 3. 8. Where, by the Works of the Devil, which the Son of God was on purpose manifested to destroy, we are, with St. *Austin*, to understand the Sins of Men ; for Mens Sins are not unfitly called the Devil's Works, because he was the first Sinner, and makes it his Business to tempt and entice others into Sin. Accordingly, our Saviour reproving the wicked Jews, for their own sinful Works, did it in these Words, *ye do the deeds of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do*, John 8. 41, 44. So that these Words of St. *John*, for this purpose the *Son of God was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil*, are in Sense the same with those that went before, *ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins*, v. 5. And now surely I need not add any more in Confirmation of so clear a Truth, which was not only the Prediction of the Prophets in the Old Testament, and the Message of an Angel in the New, but the Voice of the *Baptist*, the Testimony of Christ himself ; the Tidings of his Evangelists ; the Doctrine of his Apostles, and consequently the Belief of all Christians in the World.

But because this is a Subject of so great Importance in these licentious Days, wherein the Doctrine of Salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, is notoriously perverted to contrary Ends ; and that Grace most shamefully abused, to the Encouragement of Sin, which was purposely designed to convert us from it, let us enquire farther, and we shall find that his Doctrine,

Doctrine, as well as his Incarnation, has a direct Tendency to promote this great Part of our Salvation, which consisteth in saving, or converting, us from the Practice of our Sins.

2.

The Design of Christ's Doctrine, was to deliver us from the Dominion of Sin.

I. By his Precepts.

Let us consider our Saviour's Doctrine, and therein take particular Notice of his Precepts, his Promises, and his Threats; for these three Parts of his Doctrine, are all most apparently intended to take us off from our Sins.

I. Let us consider his Holy Precepts, or Commands; for by them we may easily perceive, that it was his Design to extirpate Sin, not only out of the Lives, but out of the very Hearts of Men, and to implant Holiness and Purity in its stead. To be fully convinced of this, we need only take a View of his famous Sermon in the Mount, wherein he delivered the Laws of Christianity, by which all that would be his Disciples were to walk: For he spendeth three whole Chapters in prescribing Rules of Holiness, and persuading Obedience to them, as if he intended to reduce Mankind to the highest Perfection that was possible upon Earth; as you may see, *Mat. ch. 5, 6, 7.*

In the first, he treats of *Poverty of Spirit*; or Humility and Lowliness of Mind; of *Mourning for Sin*; of *Meekness*, and *Hungring and Thirsting after Righteousness*; of *Mercifulness*, and *Purity of Heart*; of *Peaceableness*, and the Advantages of *Suffering for Righteousness sake*. There also he tells his Disciples, that they were *the Light of the World*; to shew, that they of all Men should have no *Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of Darkness*, but by holy and exemplary Lives should let their *Light so shine before Men, that others seeing*, &c. To this purpose he tells them farther, that *he came not to destroy, but to fulfil the Law*; i. e. to restore whatever had been taken from it, by the corrupt Glosses, and false Interpretations of Men; to shew the true Intent and Meaning of it, in its fullest Latitude and Extent, and so to heighten and advance it to a higher Pitch, than was then believed Obligatory among the Jews, changing the outward and ceremonial Observances, into inward and spiritual Obedience. And having shewed the perpetual

Obligation

Obligation of the Law, reformed by him; how it should stand in force in every part, until *Heaven and Earth should pass, and all things come to an end*, he also shews the Danger of impenitent Continuance in the Breach of any one of the least of his Commandments, assuring us, *that except our Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, (the strictest Sect among the Jews) we shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* For he requireth more than the Pharisees thought they were obliged to, advancing the Law of *Moses* to a higher Perfection, than the Letter seemed to require: Whereas it was said of old *thou shalt not kill*, he moreover forbids us to be angry without a cause; and instead of *thou shalt not commit adultery*, he forbids the *Adultery of the Eye and Heart*; and whereas it was said of old *thou shalt not forswear thy self*, he forbids all *rash and unnecessary Oaths*; and instead of requiring *an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth*, he commands us not to resist evil by way of retaliation or revenge; and tho' it had been said *thou shalt love thy Neighbour and hate thine Enemy*, he charges us to love our very Enemies, to do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, Mat. 5. throughout.

In the sixth Chapter he treats of *Alms, Prayer and Fasting*, requiring Sincerity, and warning us against *Hypocrisy*. In them all, abstracting our Hearts from Earth, and exhorting us to *lay up our Treasures in Heaven*; and in performance of our Duty to God, to rely on his good Providence for the Necessaries of this present Life.

In the seventh Chapter he forbids rash Judging, or uncharitable Censures of other Men; and lays down this as a general Rule, *whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them.* Which one Rule, if it were but as carefully observed, as it is plainly prescribed by our Lord, the Christian Commonwealth would be the most blessed, and a kind of heavenly State on Earth; wherein no Deceit, no Guile, no Violence nor Injustice, no Strifes or Contentions, no Malice, Hatred, or Uncharitableness would reign: Insomuch, that there would be no need of human Laws, to prohibit or inflict any Punish-

ments for them, because then there would be nothing but Sincerity and Truth, Peace and Concord, Justice and Charity, to be found in Mens Carriage one towards another, as it is recorded of the first Ages of the Church, when the Laws of Christianity were put in execution, and Men believed it necessary so to do.

However, the Design of Christ most evidently appears, by the Holiness of his Commands, which he gave on purpose to be observed by us as the Rule of all our Actions. Therefore when *Linacre*, occasionally taking up the Bible, had cast his Eyes on this Sermon of our Saviour's in the Mount, comparing the holy Precepts of Christ, with the unanswerable Lives of such as made Profession of his Name, he threw down the Book with this most passionate Exclamation, *either this is not Gospel, or we are not Christians*. Certain it is, that the Gospel or Rule of Christianity requireth a greater Strictness, than all that are called Christians are willing to believe; and our Saviour foreseeing this, warned us of the *Straitness of the Gate, and Narrowness of the Way that leadeth unto Life*, and bids us *beware of false Prophets*, that should teach any loose and licentious Doctrine, contrary to that which he had delivered; as you may see towards the end of his Sermon in the Mount. Yea, he tells us plainly, that *not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord; i. e. not every one that maketh Profession of his Name, not every one that calls him Lord and Master, and pretends to be his Servant, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but only he, who doth the Will of his Father which is in Heaven*. And for want of doing the Will of the Father, now revealed by the Son, he farther assures us, that many should be rejected by him at the last Day, when he shall come again to judge both Quick and Dead: yea, tho' they prophesied in his Name, and in his Name had cast out Devils, and done many wonderful Works, yet he will not own them, if they are also Workers of Iniquity, Mat. 7. 22, 23.

Lastly, he concludes his holy Sermon with an apt Similitude, wherein he farther shews the Benefit of hearing his Commands, and reducing them into Practice, together with the Vanity of *Hearing only*, with-

without Obedience to them. He that not only *hears*, but *does* these Sayings of our Saviour, is by him likened to a *wise Man*, that *built his House upon a Rock*, to shew, that the effect of righteousness should be quietness, and assurance for ever more, II. 32. 17, But on the other side, he that only *heareth* his Sayings, and *doeth them not*, is likened to a *Fool*, which *built his House upon the Sand*, to shew, that the Hope of the Hypocrite should perish, or deceive him in the end.

And now we must needs conclude, that he that came to deliver this Doctrine to the World, came certainly to work a Reformation in it, by turning us from the Practice of our Sins. But hitherto I have chiefly considered the holy Precepts of our Saviour. The same Design of taking us off from our Sins will farther appear, if in the

Second place we pass unto his Promises; for whether we consider the Nature, the End, or Conditionality of them, we must needs conclude, that they also were designed to turn us from our Sins. For,

I. The very Nature of that Bliss, which he hath promised in Heaven, implieth a Necessity of an antecedent Mortification of our Sins, and Sanctification of our Hearts, that we may be prepared, or made meet to be partakers of it, Col. 1. 12. An impure and carnal Man, cannot relish such pure and spiritual Joys, which of all things are most contrary to the vicious Habits that are predominant in his Heart. Such brutish and sensual Wretches, might indeed be pleased with a *Mahumedan Paradise*; the imaginary Pleasures whereof, are suited to the Sollicitations of their sensual Appetites, but not in holy and spiritual Enjoyments, to which, of all things that are delightful, they have the greatest Aversion. No Man delights in that which he dislikes and hates, because all Pleasure ariseth from the suitableness and agreement of the Object to some appetite, or desire of it in our Natures; so that spiritual things cannot please the carnal Lusts, or gratify the brutish Appetites of un sanctified Men. Whence it follows, by way of necessary Consequence, that we must be *sanctified and renewed after the Image of God, in Righteousness and true Holiness*, before we can be capable of those pure and

II. By his Promises.

By the Nature of the thing promised.

holy Joys, which are proper only to refined Natures. For as none can expect to be admitted to those Felicities, who continued unchanged in the Love and Practice of their Sins, so neither are they capable of perceiving them, before they are rendred so by Affections, suitable to those spiritual Fruitions; for Heaven is no sensual Paradise, but a place of perfect Holiness and Purity, as well as Happiness and Bliss: Yea, the Happiness of it doth in part consist in being perfectly freed from Sin, and all Inclinations to it, and having the Image of God repaired upon our Souls. So that Holiness is not only the way to Heaven, but the Bliss it self which we there expect, and consequently as necessary to the very Enjoyment, as to the obtaining of it. What Satisfaction can a carnal or un sanctified Man there expect, where there's nothing that would gratify, but all things that would upbraid and cross his unsubdued Lusts? But above all things the nearer Presence of our Holy God, and Contemplation of his Perfections, which are the Delight and Love of blessed Spirits, would confound and shame such vile and degenerate Wretches, that carry little but Enmity against him in their Hearts. These things being considered, we need not wonder that the Promise of *seeing God*, is made only to the *pure in heart*, Mat. 5. 8. and that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. For we are not capable of that degree of Blessedness, until we are prepared for it by proportionable degrees of Holiness, and purity in our Natures. In this respect therefore the Apostle reasonably infers, that he that *hath this hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure*, John 3. 2, 3. We know that *when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*. Where to be like unto God signifies, to be like him in Holiness, as well as like him in Bliss: So that he that hopes to be like him hereafter, must endeavour to be like him here; i. e. as he is holy, so must we be holy in all manner of conversation, 1 Pet. 1. 15. that we may be prepared and fitted for that pure and holy State, which he hath promised in his Kingdom; into which there shall not enter any thing that defileth, or whatever worketh abomination. We see then that the very Nature of

that

that spiritual Happiness, which Christ hath promised in Heaven, requireth an antecedent Purification of our Natures, to capacitate and dispose us for the Enjoyment of it. But if this to any should seem obscure, let us in the

Second place consider, the Design and Use of the Promises of his Gospel; for 'tis evident, that they are annexed to the Performance of his Commands, as *By the Design of his Promises.*

Motives to encourage, and Arguments to persuade us to obey him. His Promises of Pardon were intended to persuade us to repent; and his Promises of a Reward in Heaven, to excite us to the Performance of our Duty here on Earth: So far are they from encouraging any in their evil Ways. When he promiseth *Remission of our Sins*, 'tis to induce us to forsake them, *Acts 2. 38.* When he promiseth *Rest unto our Souls*, 'tis to persuade us to take his yoke upon us, to learn of him, and become his servant and disciples, *Mat. 11. 29.* When he promiseth a *Crown of Life*, 'tis to make us constant and faithful unto death, *Rev. 2. 10.* And the like may be said of all the other Promises of a glorious Immortality in his Kingdom; for whoever shall diligently consider them, will find that they are urged as Arguments and Motives to persuade us, to abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, *1 Cor. 15. last v.* But if there be any that will not yet understand these plain and evident things, because they make so much against Continuance in their beloved Sins, the Necessity of Conversion from them will yet more clearly appear, if in the

Third place we consider, the Conditionality of our Saviour's Promises; I mean, especially, his Promises of Pardon and eternal Life; for they are not absolute and irrelative, but restrained to such as forsake

their Sins, and return unto him: So that we can plead no Right, nor lay any Claim unto them, in case we refuse to submit to the Conditions on which they are made; for Christ promiseth no Man Forgiveness of his Sins, of whom he doth not first exact Repentance and Conversion from them. Those *Israelites* (we know) that rebelled in the Wilderness were destroyed there, and entred not into the pro-

mised Land, because they so far provoked God by their Sins, that he sware in his wrath, they should not enter into his rest, Heb. 3. 11. From whose Example the Apostle gives us this Admonition in the following Chapter, let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it, Heb. 4. 1. He speaks not of an anxious and despairing, but of a watchful and cautious Fear, exciting us to Diligence and Care, lest by Negligence and Presumption, we should backslide from God, and so come short of his promised Rest : For the Promise being conditional, belongeth only to such as are Heirs according to Promise ; i. e. to the obedient Children of God, who have given up themselves to the Conduct and Guidance of his Son Jesus Christ, Gal. 3. 29. If he be Christs, then are ye Abrahams seed, and heirs according to the promise For to be Christs, signifies to be Christians, not only in Title and Profession, but in Reality and Truth ; and consequently the condition of Obedience must always be respected, as requisite to prepare and qualify us for the promised Inheritance. Having therefore these Promises, (saith the Apostle) let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. 7. 1. Where, again, he supposeth the Necessity of Holiness, and Fear of God, to secure our Interest in his Promises, and qualify us for the Priviledges and Inheritance of his Children ; as will evidently appear, by observing the Connexion with the foregoing Verses, in the end of the former Chapter ; Come out from among them ; i. e. from the unbelieving and idolatrous Gentiles, v. 15, 16. and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, v. 17, 18. Whereupon it immediately follows, having therefore these Promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse, &c. i. e. since God has promised the Care and Kindness of a Father to us, on Condition of our Obedience to him, let us always be careful to behave our selves as dutiful Children, that we may be truly qualified for his Favour, and fitted for the Inheritance of his Kingdom ; for his Promise

of

of being a Father to us, and owning us for his Children, includes the express Condition of *coming out from the idolatrous and unbelieving Gentiles, and being separate unto God*, ch. 6. 17. neither partaking with them in their Sins, nor polluting our selves with their wicked Practices, but cleansing our selves, &c. and endeavouring to grow in Grace, and still more and more to *perfect Holiness, in the fear of God*; and then he will receive you, *then he will be a Father to you, and ye shall be his Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord.*

And thus we see, that not only the Precepts, but the very Promises of God, were intended to turn us from our Sins, for the Matter of his Precepts, is often made the Condition of his Promises; so that besides the spiritual Nature of his promised Reward, which requires an antecedent Sanctification of our Hearts to prepare us for it, and besides their Design and Use, which is to dissuade us from our Sins, and to comfort and encourage us in the Service of God; the Condition included in them most evidently secureth the Performance of our Duty to him; for his Offers of Mercy and Pardon, are always restrained to the penitent and returning Sinner; and his Promises of Reward, made only to his obedient Servants. We cannot therefore expect to be rewarded by him, if we continue in Rebellion against him; for he hath threatened to punish obstinate and persevering Sinners, as well as to reward his sincere and faithful Servants. How then can they think to be Partakers of his Promises, who are not careful to observe those Precepts, to which his Promises are annexed, and which are farther enforced on us, with most terrible Denunciations of the Wrath of God, against all that impenitently continue in Disobedience to them; such as *exclusion from the kingdom of heaven*, Mat 5. 20. and *torments in everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*, Mat. 25. 41. And this brings me in the

Third place, to the Consideration of his Threats, III. By his which, besides the Precepts and Promises of Christ, Threats. do farther shew his holy Design, in saving and converting us from the Practice of our Sins; for he doth not threaten Sinners to drive them to despair, and so torment them before their time; but to bring them

to Repentance, and so to free them from those Torments, which otherwise they must suffer. By foretelling the Danger, he forewarns us to avoid it, by leaving off those Sins, which continued in would expose us to it; so that his Threatnings also are in this respect a farther Testimony of his Kindness to us, these being designed too for our Benefit and Emendation. For as *Tertulian* speaks, *non cominaretur non pœnitenti, si non ignosceret pœnitenti*, de Pace: He would not threaten him that repented not, if he would not pardon him that did. *Ad remedium nostri illud facit, indulgens est etiam tunc cum minatur*, Novatian de Trin. p. 709. He doth it for our good, and pities us even when he threatens. Yea, as another speaks, *minatur, ne in nominas inducat*, Chrysost. hom. de poen. He threatens, that he may not bring his Threats upon us. For these Revelations of the Wrath of God, against persevering Sinners, are merciful Warnings to reclaim them from their Sins, that Iniquity may not be their Ruin.

Thus it evidently appears from our Saviour's Doctrine, whether we consider his Precepts, his Promises, or his Threats, that he came to save and convert us from our Sins; for it is a *Doctrine according to godliness*, 1 Tim. 6. 3. He gave the most Holy Precepts, that ever were delivered to the World, advancing Religion to the highest Pitch, and establishing it for ever; and when he sent forth his Apostles to disciple all Nations, by admitting them into his Church, he gave it most strictly in their Charge, that they should teach them to *observe all things whatsoever he commanded them*, Mat. 28. 20. *promising eternal salvation to them that believe and obey him*, and threatening everlasting condemnation to contumacious and persevering sinners, Mark 16. 16. Accordingly, his Apostles, in all their Epistles, prosecute the same Design, every where inculcating his Precepts of Holiness, and enforcing Obedience to them, by most gracious Promises of the Love of God, to such as shall observe them; and most fearful Denunciations of his Wrath, to such as shall impenitently continue in the Violation of them. For this was their constant Doctrine, *that God would reward every man according to his deeds*, Rom. 2. 6. i. e. as it follows by way of Explanation

to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour and immortality, he will render eternal Life; but to them who are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil, v. 7, 8, 9. What Doctrine can be more powerful than this, to turn Men from their Sins? From it we must be forced to conclude, that he, who revealed it to Mankind, designed a Change and Amendment of our Lives. But farther,

Not only the Doctrine of our Saviour, but his Miracles too, were evidently designed to promote this Work of Reformation, which he came to effect in the World. 'Tis not an easy matter to dissuade Men from their beloved Sins, or to make them believe that Doctrine, which says they must forsake them; our Saviour therefore confirmed his, by those divine and supernatural Works, which he wrought on purpose to satisfy the World that he came from God, that being convinced of the heavenly and divine Original of what he taught, they might without any more dispute, be brought to that Faith and Obedience required in the Gospel. To this purpose he turned Water into Wine, and encreased a few Loaves and Fishes, so as to satisfy several Thousand hungry People: Commanded the Winds and the Sea to obey him, and made the very Devils submit to his Pleasure: Gave Strength unto the Weak, Health unto the Sick; Curing Fevers with the Touch of his Hand, and an Issue of Blood with the Hem of his Garment; Cleansed the Lepers, and opened the Eyes of the Blind, and Ears of the Deaf: Made the Lame to walk, the Dumb to speak, and the very Dead to live; one of which had lain four Days in the Grave. All this and much more he did, that those that would not believe him on any other account, might believe him for his very works sake, John 14. 11. For the works that he did, bore witness of him that the father sent him, John 5. 36. and their Witness was so great, that tho' without them he required not absolute assent, yet, upon their Evidence, he justly challenged Belief; John 10. 37, 38. *If I do not the works of my father, believe me not; but if I do, tho' ye believe not me,*

2.
The Design
of Christ's
Miracles,
was to de-
liver us
from the
Dominion
of Sin.

me, believe the works. These supernatural Works and miraculous Operations of our Saviour, are therefore of great Force and Efficacy to turn us from our Sins, because they are so evident a Testimony of his Mission from the Father, and as it were the great Seal of Heaven, to confirm the Doctrine which he taught, to convince the World of its Truth, and to satisfy the Minds of Men, that he deliver'd to them the Will and Counsels of Almighty God; for whatever confirms our Faith in the Doctrine of his holy Gospel, must needs be of force to turn us from our Sins, against which his Doctrine was constantly directed. So that the very Miracles of our Saviour, most evidently served his Design of Reformation in the World, by sealing and confirming to us the heavenly Original, and divine Authority, of all those holy Truths which he revealed in his Gospel.

4.
The Design
of his ex-
emplary
Life, was to
deliver us
from the
Dominion
of Sin.

I. As it is
a Pattern
to direct us.

Besides the convincing Power of his Miracles, let us consider the Example of his innocent and most holy Life; for this also was intended to take us off from our Sins, as being not only a Pattern to direct us in the way of God, but a Provocation also to draw forth our Endeavours in imitation of him, or to excite and allure us to follow his Steps, *who did no sin, neither had any guile found in his mouth,* 1 Pet. 2. 22.

I. That his Life was intended for a Pattern unto us, is evident from his own Words, *Mat. 11. 28, 29.* for when he bids *us learn of him*, he directs us not only to his Doctrine, but to his Example, or to himself, *who was meek and lowly in heart.* He well knew that it was the most effectual way of Teaching, to do it both by Words and Works, and therefore took our Nature on him, and dwelt among us in a Tabernacle of Flesh; to his heavenly Doctrine adding his own Example, and calling upon us to follow him; *Mark 8. 34. whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and follow me.* As if he had said, whosoever will be my Disciple here, or expects to enter into my Kingdom hereafter, must renounce the Dictates of his own corrupt and depraved Heart, and follow me, who have not only prescribed the way of Life by my Doctrine, but moreover become a Guide by my own Example, to draw all that will be

be my Disciples after me. For we must go the same way to Heaven that our Forerunner went before us, *looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith; i. e. eying and considering him, who endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds, that by his Example we may be encouraged to run with Patience the race of obedience set before us, Heb. 12. 1, 2, 3.* Yea, to this purpose he left us his Example, that we should follow his steps, *1 Pet. 2. 21.* If now we consider, that he came into the world to do his fathers will, *Heb. 10. 9.* and that when he was come, he made it his meat and drink to do it, *John 4. 34.* we may easily perceive, how much his Example tends to save or take us off from our Sins: For he never gave an ill Example in any instance, *but as the father gave him commandment, so he did, John 14. 31. being in all things faithful to him that appointed him, Heb. 3. 2.* and always doing such things as pleased him, *John 8. 29.* What more need be said, to shew his constant and exact Obedience to his Father's Will? What Care and Circumspection therefore should we use, who have such a Pattern set before us? For we are to copy our Lives out of his; tho' when we have done our utmost, they will come infinitely short of the Beauty of their Original. But a Spark of Light may be of the same Nature with the Sun; and tho' we cannot reach his absolute and unsinning Perfection, we should labour after as near a Conformity to him as we can: His Life was the Exemplar, and ours is to be the Transcript; for he hath given us an Example, *that we should do as he hath done, John 3. 15.* Which Text, tho' it especially respects the Duties of Humility and Love, may more generally be applied to all, that by his Example are commanded to us; for he that saith *he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked, 1 John 2. 6.* To this purpose the Scripture so oft propounds unto us his Example, that seeing his good Works we might follow him; and in so doing, glorify our Father which is in Heaven. For,

II. That his Example is not only a Pattern, but a Provocation and Inducement to follow his Steps, is evident from the Nature of the thing; *II. As an Inducement to provoke us to follow we his Steps.*

we cannot but look upon it as a most strong Allective unto Holiness: For if there be any Force or Efficacy in the Example of the Son of God, how can we grudge or think it much to do, what he himself has done before us, and by his own Example, as well as Authority, commanded to us? *The Disciple is not greater than his Master, nor Servant than his Lord*, can never more justly be urged, than when our Lord and Master is the Son of God, who imposeth no other Yoke, nor lays any other Burthen upon us, than what he underwent himself before us. The imperious Jews said, and did not, their own Actions contradicted their Prescriptions; for they *bound heavy Burthens, and grievous to be born, and laid them on other mens shoulders, when themselves would not touch them with one of their Fingers*. But our Master both said and did, becoming a glorious Example of what he taught, as a practical Comment on his own Law, to illustrate and shew the reasonableness of his Commands, and to provoke us to a more ready and chearful Obedience to them: For to imitate him, is to aspire after the highest Excellencies, to adorn and dignify our human Natures, and in some measure to become like unto God, whose imitable Perfections so gloriously shone forth in the Life of his holy Son; yea, it was one End, why he assumed our Nature, and became like unto us, that by Obedience to his Doctrine, and Imitation of his Example, we might in our measures become like unto him. In some things indeed he was imitable before; as in his Love, Mercy, Goodness, Holiness, and the like imitable Attributes of the divine Nature. But before his Incarnation, we could not imitate him in passive Excellencies, because he was impassible; but when he humbled himself, and became *obedient unto death*, he set us a Pattern of Humility and Obedience in the hardest Points; so that we cannot reasonably repine at any Offices of Religion, tho' attended with Difficulties and Sufferings, yea, with Reproach and Shame in the account of the foolish World. Since we have so glorious a Precedent, even the Example of the Son of God, to lead and encourage us unto them, how can we refuse to follow him? *Regis ad exemplum, &c.* The Prince's Practice,

is the Peoples Copy ; who think it an Honour to follow him, whom they see so much advanced in Dignity above them. But it's a far greater Honour in the *Heraldry* of Heaven, to follow the Steps, and imitate the Example of the Prince of Life, who himself became our Forerunner and Guide, to lead the way to Immortality, and conduct us to his heavenly Kingdom. If this will not prevail, we ought to consider how the Scripture propounds the Example of Christ to be followed, as well as his Doctrine to be believed ; so that we cannot expect the Benefits of his Death, unless we are careful to imitate the Example of his Life : So far was he from intending by his Death to make void the Necessity of conforming our selves to his Life, that one end of his very Death was, *1 Pet. 2. 21. that we should follow his steps.* Thus far the Case is clear, that the Incarnation, Doctrines, Miracles and Example of our Saviour, were all designed to save or convert us from our Sins, to separate us from the World, and the Pollutions of it, and to constitute an holy People, for the Service and Glory of God.

Nor will it be difficult to prove, that this was also ^{5.} *The Design* one Design of our Saviour's Death ; for we are expressly *of our Saviour's* told, that he gave himself *for us, to redeem us from all* *Death, was* *to deliver* *us from the* *Dominion* *of Sin.* *iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of* *good works,* Tit. 2. 14. A Text which I shall have occasion to consider again ; for this is a Subject not so often taken notice of, nor so much considered, as the Weight and Importance of the Truth requires : I shall therefore insist the longer on it, because I think the Neglect of pressing it, to be one great Cause of that Licentiousness that hath long overspread the Christian World. Alas ! one great Design of the Saviour of it, is but little laid to heart, tho' so evident and clear, that I should question whether that Man ever read or heard the Gospel, that doth not readily acknowledge, that our Saviour came into the World, preached, lived and died, to convert and save us from a vicious Life, and yet (by whose Policy we may easily judge) Men commonly forget this Benefit of his Death : When they hear of the Death and Sufferings of Christ, they usually think of nothing

thing but Pardon and Deliverance from the Guilt and Punishment of their Sins, whereas 'tis evident, that one End of his very Death, was to save us from the Dominion and Power of them; *i. e.* not only to justify and free us from the Guilt and Punishment, but moreover to sanctify and deliver us from the Reign and Practice of them. You will not, I hope, so far mistake me, as to think that I exclude Freedom from Guilt and Punishment from among the Benefits of his Death, on which all our Hopes of Salvation from either of them do depend; for by discovering another Benefit, I do not in the least degree detract from these, on which I intend hereafter particularly to speak. But as Christ must not be divided, so the Benefits of his Death must not be separated one from the other: If we expect to be justified, we must be also sanctified: If we will be freed from the Wrath to come, we must avoid the Causes of that Wrath, which will come upon the Children of Disobedience. To make this appear, I consider,

*I. As it was
the final
Cause.*

I. That the saving us from the Dominion of our Sins, and converting us to the Service of God, was a final Cause, *i. e.* one End of the very Death of Christ; for he died for us, that we might live; but not unto our selves, or in our Sins, but to him, and in his Service, *who laid down his life for our redemption*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. *He died for all* (saith the Apostle) *that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but to him who died for them.* Where, to live unto our selves, evidently signifies to continue in our Sins, or to indulge and gratify the forbidden Lusts of Flesh and Blood; and to live unto him that died for us, as clearly signifies to forsake our Sins, and live unto his Glory, by giving up our selves unto his Service. The plain Meaning therefore is, that Christ died for us, that we might not henceforth live in our Sins, but in his Service, and to his Glory, *who purchased us unto himself by his blood*, Heb. 9. 26. Correspondently another Apostle tells us, that he *bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. So that by the Testimony of two Apostles, one great De-

sign

sign of our Saviour's Death, was to destroy Sin in us, and bring us to Holiness and Righteousness of Life. To the same purpose, *Calvin* (in *loc.*) interprets the other Text, 1. *Pet.* 3. 18. *Christ also suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; for by the Death of Christ (saith he) we were consecrated unto God, that we should both live and die unto him.* This is certain, that the Service of Sin was part of that Thralldom from which he came to deliver us, and the Service of God part of that happy Liberty to which he came to restore us, not only by his Doctrine and Example, but also by his Death; for he gave himself for us, *that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself, &c.* *Tit.* 2. 14. Where the Particle *that*, denotes the Reason of his gracious Condescension, so that the Words contain an Answer to this important Question. *Why did our Saviour Christ give himself for us?* The Apostle answers, *that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, &c.* By which it is apparent, that he died to redeem us not only from the Guilt and Punishment, but also from the Dominion and Power of Sin, that it might not reign over us, nor we obey it in the Lusts thereof; but that on the contrary, we might spend all our Days in his Service, who redeemed us for a peculiar People to himself. And now what can be more plain, than that the very Death of Christ was purposely designed to rescue us from our Sins, and work a Reformation in the World. So the Apostle in another place expressly says, *that he gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, Gal. 1. 4. i. e. from the evil Customs and sinful Practices thereof, that we might serve him in righteousness and holiness before him all the days of our life, Luke 1. 75.* To this purpose are those other Words. *Col. 1. 21, 22. you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy, unblamable and irreprovable in his sight.* And again, in that parallel place, *Ephes. 6. 26, 27. Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, by the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church,*

Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish. In which two last places the Apostle, I suppose, comprehends both those great Benefits of our Redemption by the Death of Christ, viz. the Justification of our Persons, and Sanctification of our Natures ; or God's gracious Acceptance unto Pardon, and the Renovation of our Hearts and Lives, and we must not separate what God hath joined, as the joint and not to be divided Consequents of the Death of his Holy Son, *who of God is made unto us not only righteousness, but sanctification and redemption also*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. i. e. the Author and Cause of our Sanctification, and Deliverance from the Practice and Dominion, as well as of our Justification and Freedom, from the Guilt and Condemnation of Sin. So that, including our Justification, Christ may be said, even with respect to our Sanctification also, to have *reconciled us by his Death* ; i. e. to have given himself for the Church, to sanctify and cleanse it, that he might present it to himself a *glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, but that it should be holy, unblamable and irreprovable in his sight.* For this spotless, irreprovable and unblamable Estate, may be considered either,

1. As the Design and End of the Death of Christ to be gradually accomplished, according to the gradual Operations of his Grace ; by which, he is ready to sanctify and cleanse us more and more from our Sins, and still to carry us on to farther degrees of Holiness, until we are perfected in Glory. Where indeed we shall be completely Holy, and without Blemish ; for then we shall be perfectly freed from all those Stains and Spots of Infirmities, which attend the Condition of our Mortality here on Earth. So that we need not be affrighted at those Words, which seem to imply an absolute Perfection, nor think that Christ has mist his Aim, because there is no Church on Earth so glorious, as to be free from Spot or Wrinkle ; for the Apostle doth not speak of what is already perfectly done, but of what was the End and Design of Christ in giving himself for the Church : He *gave himself for it* (saith he) *that he might sanctify and cleanse it* ; and so we know he doth

as to all the real Members of it, for he sanctifies them here in part, and will do it perfectly in Heaven, and then they shall indeed be presented *holy, unblamable and irreprovable in his sight*; if they continue in the Faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, as it follows, Col. 1. 23. Which Condition of Perseverance unto the End shews, that the Apostle had respect to their final Reconciliation by the Death of Christ, because that irreprovable State is made to depend on their Continuance in the Faith.

2. This spotless State, which the Apostle in the forecited Texts makes the end and scope of the Death of Christ, must be considered (as I intimated before) so as to comprehend our Sanctification and Justification both together; for there is nothing said in either Text, but may be applied to the lively Members of the Church, who are washed, who are sanctified, and justified too, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God, 1 Cor. 6. 11. For being sanctified by his spirit, and justified by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, they are at peace with God, and not subject to condemnation, Rom. 5. 1. and 8. 1. their former Sins are blotted out, and their present Infirmities graciously passed by; so that being confirmed to the end, they shall be accounted blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. 1. 8. Yea, the Scripture after useth that and the like Expressions, even in reference to our Sanctification. Hence the Apostle prays for the Thessalonians, that God would sanctify them wholly, that their whole Spirit, Soul and Body might be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thel. 5. 23. Accordingly, St. Peter exhorts us to be diligent, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless, 2 Pet. 3. 14. see 1 Tim. 5. 7.

These things being duly considered, there will remain no reasonable ground of doubt, but that our present Sanctification is included in those forementioned Texts; for the Holy Ghost, in the Scripture, often useth the like Expressions, speaking of holy and justified Persons, whose Sins are pardoned, whose Hearts are sanctified, and Consciences purified by

renewing Grace ; approving their Sincerity, and passing by those unavoidable Infirmities, which are elsewhere called *the spots of the children of God*, Deut. 32. 5. Which way soever we understand the Words, 'tis evident from them that our Sanctification was designed in the Death of Christ ; as also from the forementioned Texts, wherein we are told *that he died for us, that we might live unto him ; that he bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, that we being dead unto Sin, might live unto Righteousness ; that he gave himself for us, to redeem us from all Iniquity, and deliver us from this present evil World.* For what else can be the Meaning of these Texts, but that he died to take us off from our Sins, and convert us to the Service of God. To this purpose I consider,

II. *The efficient Cause of our Sanctification.*

II. That the Death of Christ is an efficient Cause of our Sanctification ; *i. e.* of saving and cleansing us from our Sins, and implanting in us Holiness and Purity of Heart ; for the Scripture often attributeth this to his Death, as an effect unto its proper Cause. Thus, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *we are said to be redeemed by his precious Blood from our vain conversation.* Which Redemption, tho' it seems in the following Word to be explained of the Jewish Customs, received by Tradition from their Fathers, yet there can be no doubt, but the same Blood, which redeemed them from the Vanity of the Jews, redeemed others also from the Impiety of the Gentiles, received from their Fathers likewise. Yea, the Apostle urgeth it as an Argument to enforce his former Exhortation, v. 15. *as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation ; it follows, and pass the time of your sojourning here in fear, forasmuch as ye know that ye were redeemed from your vain Conversation by the precious Blood of Christ.* So that this *vain Conversation*, from which we were redeemed by *his precious Blood*, must in general be extended to an unconverted Life, according to that of the same Apostle, 1 Pet. 2. 24, 25. *where he interprets our being healed by our Saviour's stripes, by returning to him, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls ; whereas we were before as sheep going astray, wandring from God, the Spring and Fountain of all our Happiness.*

Besides

Besides these, there are several other Texts, where-
in this Deliverance from a sinful Life is attributed
to the Death and Blood of Christ; as *Colos. 1. 21.*
you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your
minds by wicked works, yet hath he now reconciled in the
body of his flesh, through death. For since this Enmity
is to be understood in an active as well as passive
Sense; *i. e.* since they were Enemies to God by their
wicked Works, as well as he an Enemy to them for
the same hostile Practices against him, it's evident
that the Reconciliation, there spoken of, through the
Death of Christ, is also to be understood in a double
sense, so as to comprehend their Reconciliation unto
God, by forsaking of their Sins, or laying down
those Weapons of Hostility against him, as well as
God's Reconciliation unto them, by pardoning of
their Sins, and receiving them into Favour. The
same Effect is also ascribed to the Death of Christ,
Rev. 1. 5. where we read that he *loved us, and washed*
us from our sins by his own blood. For *washing* there
includes not only our Justification, but our Sancti-
fication; both which Benefits proceed from the Love
and Blood of Christ, as hath been sufficiently proved
from many other Texts. Besides, the following Words
clearly interpret this *washing of us from our Sins*, of
Sanctification from the Filth and Pollution of them;
for having thus *washed us*, he is said to *have made us*
kings and priests unto God, v. 6. *Kings*, by delivering
us from Bondage, and giving us Dominion over Sin
and Satan. And *Priests*, by consecrating us to the
Service of God, or both together a royal and kingly
Priesthood; *i. e.* a peculiar People separated to God,
to *shew forth the praise of him, who hath called us out*
of darkness into his marvellous Light, 1 Pet. 2. 9. This
being the Effect of our being washed from our Sins by
the Blood of Christ, we must needs allow a cleansing
Vertue to it: Nor can we reasonably think, that
Christ so washed us from our Sins in his own Blood,
that we might wallow more securely in them; or
that he freeth us from the Guilt and Punishment,
and conniveth at the Filth and Practice of them.
No, surely, he had a better and more holy Design,
when he opened that Fountain of his Blood for Sin
I 2 and

and Uncleaness ; for we heard before out of *Ephes. 5. 26.* *that he gave himself for us, that he might sanctify and cleanse us from our sins.* And we are elsewhere told, that his Blood hath Vertue in it, *to purge our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God, Heb. 9. 14. i. e.* to cleanse us from them in respect of their inherent Filth, and Defilement of our Souls : For since the Purgation of our Consciences from dead Works, is ascribed to the Blood of Christ, and the Service of the Living God made the Effect of that Purgation, it's evident, that there is a purifying as well as pardoning, a sanctifying as well as justifying Vertue in his Blood ; or that it purgeth us from dead Works themselves, as well as from the Guilt of Death, contracted by them.

Obj. If it be objected that the Apostle here compares the Blood of Christ with that of the legal Sacrifices, mentioned in the former Verse, and that the Sanctification to the purifying of the Flesh, which is there ascribed unto them, is evidently to be understood in the sense of Expiation, or removing of Guilt, and obtaining Pardon, so that the Apostle should regularly speak of the same, or else his Comparison would not rightly proceed, I answer,

Ans. 1. That the Apostle makes this Comparison on purpose to shew the difference between the Blood of Christ, and that of the legal Sacrifices, mentioned before, and attributeth much more unto this, than could be ascribed unto them ; for (saith he) *if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh ; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences, &c.* Tho', therefore, those legal Sacrifices served only to remove the Guilt of legal Pollutions, yet, he might well extend the Efficacy of the Blood of Christ, not only to the more effectual removal of the Guilt, but also to the purging of the Conscience from the inherent Pollution of Sin it self ; *i. e.* to the sanctifying and fitting of us for the Service of the Living God : For 'tis the Author's Design and Business, to set forth the superlative Excellence and transcendent Vertue of the Blood of Christ,

now

now under the Gospel, above the Types and Shadows of it under the Law.

2. The Comparison will proceed right enough, in this double sense of Purgation by the Blood of Christ; for those legal Sacrifices, with which it is here compared, are said to sanctify to the purifying of the Flesh; *i. e.* to expiate or remove the Guilt of legal Uncleaness, and consequently to cleanse the People, and make them holy in a legal sense; I mean, capable of Communion in holy things, or fit for the Service of God in the Congregation. So, saith the Apostle, the Blood of Christ shall much more *purge our consciences from dead works*; *i. e.* remove the Guilt, and work a real Holiness too, that we may be fitted for the Service of the Living God. Thus we see, how aptly one member of the Comparison answers to the other, in ascribing a sanctifying as well as expiating Vertue to the Blood of Christ.

3. 'Tis farther observable, that a great part of this Epistle to the *Hebrews*, is spent in shewing the Excellency of the Blood of Christ, above the Sacrifices of the Law, in respect of both these Benefits, *viz.* the expiation of Sin, or removal of Guilt, together with the sanctification of our Hearts, or cleansing us from our Sins, and fitting us for the Service of God. For we read, that the *Law made nothing perfect*, Heb. 7. 19. that it had *but a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, and therefore could never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect*, Heb. 10. 1. And more plainly yet, that the *gifts and sacrifices under the law, could not make him perfect that did the service, as pertaining to conscience*, Heb. 9. 9. because they could *not purge the conscience from dead works*, either in respect of the Guilt, or Practice of them, could neither obtain full Pardon of Sin in the sight of God, nor give Grace and Strength to resist it for the time to come. For that these were two principal Imperfections, wherein the *weakness and unprofitableness of the Law* did consist, Heb. 7. 18. is evident from the forementioned Texts; but especially from the Opposition, where we find the Supply of these two Defects of the Sacrifices of the Law, ascribed to the Sacrifice and

Death of Christ; for so we also read, that tho' the *Law made nothing perfect, yet the bringing in of a better hope by the Gospel did*, Heb. 7. 19. because God hath promised a full and perfect Pardon through his Son, as also Grace and Strength, to enable us so far to forsake our Sins, as to be accepted by him. And therefore our Saviour is most justly stiled *the Surety of a better testament*, Heb. 7. 22. and *the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises, than that which was made with the Israelites by Moses in the wilderness*, Heb. 8. 9. In the next Verse, the Apostle tells us what these better Promises were, in rehearsing those two Branches of the new and better Covenant, which was established by the Blood of Christ. The *first* is, that God hath promised to put *his Laws into our minds, and write them in our hearts*; that observing his holy Law, we might be *his People* in a peculiar manner, as well *as he our God*: And then, *secondly*, when this was done, he farther promised to be *merciful to our unrighteousness, and remember our sins no more*, Heb. 8. 10, 12. In the first of these, he promised his sanctifying and renewing Grace, to enable us to forsake our Sins, and walk in his holy Ways. In the second, he promised his justifying and pardoning Grace, in forgiving our Sins, and receiving us into Favour. Both which Branches of the Covenant of Grace, have a manifest Aspect on the Reformation and Amendment of our Lives: For in the first, God promised his assisting Grace, to enable us to reform them. And in the other, the Pardon of all our Sins, as an Encouragement to do it: For 'tis evident, that his Promises of Pardon, are Motives to Repentance; that being converted to him, our Sins may indeed be blotted out.

Of these two Benefits of the new Covenant, established in the Blood of Christ, I also understand those other Words, *Heb. 9. 12. neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered into the holy place, (that is into Heaven, of which the Holy of Holies in the Temple was a Type) having first by his own blood obtained eternal redemption for us*. For that the Apostle speaks of Redemption, both from Guilt and Dominion of Sin by the Blood of Christ, (*who gave*

gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, Tit. 2. 14.) appears from the following Words, where he interprets this Redemption by his Blood, to be its purging our Consciences from dead Works, to serve the Living God, (of which I have already given an account.) In Chap. 10. he still proceeds, to shew the superlative Excellency of the Blood of Christ, above the Sacrifices of the Law, in both these respects; for tho' it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins, either in respect of the Guilt or Dominion of them, v. 4. yet, saith he, we are sanctified (I suppose in both these Senses) through the offering of the body of Christ, v. 10. For that the Apostle speaketh there not only of the Expiation of our Sins, but also of the Mortification or subduing of them, is more than probable from the following Verses; Every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this Man, that is our Saviour Christ, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool, v. 11, 12, 13. For this subduing of his Enemies, most evidently contains the subduing of our Sins, and setting up his Throne in our Hearts, by the Power of his Grace, purchased for us by the sacrifice of himself on the cross, Heb. 10. 13. The Necessity of which the Apostle farther intimates, v. 22. where he exhorts us to draw near (unto God) with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and washed with pure water, Heb. 10. 22. i. e. having our consciences purged from dead works, to serve the living God; as he spake before. For he is still speaking of this purging Virtue of the Blood of Christ, and seems here to allude to the sprinkling of Blood on several Occasions under the Law; as in the Offering for sins of Ignorance, Lev. 4. 6. and on the great day of Attonement, Lev. 16. 14. as also in the cleansing of the Leper, Lev. 14. 7. To shew, that as the Jews, under the Law, were to be cleansed by the sprinkling of Blood, that they might be prepared and fitted for the Service of God; so we, under the Gospel, must be sprinkled or cleansed from an evil Conscience, or the Leprosy of

Sin, by the Blood of Jesus, that we may with a true Heart draw near unto God. Accordingly, we find that *the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ*, is by another Apostle connected with *sanctification of the spirit unto obedience*, 1 Pet. 1. 2. For by shedding of his Blood, he purchased all that Grace, which is afforded to us for the Sanctification of our Hearts, and framing us to new Obedience; which Obedience, tho' as yet imperfect, (if in Sincerity and Truth) he hath promised to accept. So that, to have our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience by the Blood of Jesus, comprehends the Sanctification of our Natures by his Spirit unto Obedience: Which Sanctification is (I suppose) ascribed to the Blood of Jesus; because, by shedding his Blood, he procured for us his Spirit of Grace, to sanctify and prepare us for his Service; as I shall more fully shew, when I come to explain the way and manner of our Sanctification by our Saviour's Death.

By the way let me also add, that this seems also to be the Meaning of that *pure Water*, mentioned after *the sprinkling of our Hearts from an evil Conscience* in the forementioned Text, Heb. 10. 22. For the Apostle, alluding to the external Washings under the Law, seems to make use of this Expression, to represent the purifying Grace of the Spirit under the Gospel; for the sanctifying Grace of God, was elsewhere promised in the same metaphorical Terms; as Ezek. 36. 25. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.* Which is thus explained in the following Verses; *A new heart will I give, and a new spirit will I put within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.* You may easily perceive, that this Exposition is very pertinent to my purpose; because this *sprinkling of our Hearts from an evil Conscience, and being washed with pure Water*, which I interpret of the purifying Grace of God, is evidently an Effect of the Death of Christ, and therefore expressed by the sprinkling of his Blood, in allusion to that manner of Purification under the Law. However, you have heard two things sufficiently proved, by many other clear and perspicuous Texts; as,

1. That one End and Design of our Saviour's Death

was to take us off from our Sins, and work a Reformation in the World; for so we expressly read, that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but to him who died for them, 2 Cor. 5. 15. That he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin might live unto righteousness, 1 Pet. 2. 24. That he loved his church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, Ephes. 5. 26. That he gave himself for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world, Gal. 1. 4. And more plainly and fully yet, that he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, &c. Tit. 2. 14. All which Texts have been already explained, tho' most of them are so clear, that they scarce needed any Explication.

2. You have also heard it proved, that as it was one Design of our Saviour's Death to take us off from our Sin, so there is an Efficacy, or Vertue in his Blood, to promote this holy Purpose, and accomplish this Design of Reformation in the World; for the Scripture attributeth this unto his Death, as an Effect unto its proper Cause; and when it is said that we were redeemed by his precious blood from our vain conversation, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. That he is made unto us not only righteousness, but sanctification and redemption, 1 Cor. 1. 30. That those which were enemies to God by wicked works, were reconciled by his death, Col. 1. 20. That he hath washed us from our sins in his own blood, Rev. 1. 5. That by it he hath obtained eternal redemption for us, both from the Guilt and Power of Sin; and that it will purge our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God, Heb. 9. 12, 14. And lastly, that we must have our hearts sprinkled by it from an evil conscience, that we may with a pure heart draw nigh unto God, Heb. 10. 22. By these, and other Texts, it is, I say, sufficiently evident, that our Saviour's Blood hath a Vertue in it, not only to remove the Guilt, but to cleanse and purify our Hearts, from the inherent Filthiness and Pollution of our Sins, and so to sanctify and fit us for the Service of God. That the Texts which I have produced, do most of them speak of the expiation of Sin, or removal of the Guilt by the Blood of Christ, is most certain; all that I contend for is, that

that they speak of our Sanctification too, or that we are not *only justified, but sanctified also by the Blood of the Covenant*, as once more the Apostle intimates, *Heb. 10. 29.*

Our Saviour's Death doth deliver us from the Dominion of Sin.

The thing it self is most certain, it being so frequently affirmed in the Scripture; all the difficulty is concerning the manner, how our Sanctification is wrought by our Saviour's Death; for the clearing of which, I must shew you, what kind of Influence and Efficacy it is, that I attribute to the Blood of Christ, in saying, that it hath a Vertue in it to purge us from our Sins themselves; *i. e.* how, and in what manner, we are sanctified by his Blood. Our Saviour's Death, doth many ways tend to the Salvation or Deliverance of us from the Practice of our Sins: For the more methodical Proceeding, I shall reduce them all to three general Heads; considering his Death,

I. As a meritorious.

II. As an exemplary.

III. As an impulsive Cause of our Sanctification, or Conversion from our Sins.

And I shall begin with the first of these, because that is the Principal and Foundation, upon which all our Hopes of Victory over them doth especially depend.

I. As it is the meritorious Cause.

I. Therefore we are to consider that our Saviour's Death, is the meritorious Cause of our Salvation from the Dominion and Practice of our Sins, because by his Death he purchased for us the Spirit of Grace, to assist us against them, and accomplish the Work of Sanctification in our Hearts. To this purpose, I understand that of the Prophet, who brings in the Father promising to the Son, that *when he should make his soul an offering for sin, he should see of his seed, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, and that he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*, *II. 53. 10. 11.* For the Words being evidently spoken of the Conversion of Sinners unto Christ, do as evidently suppose the Effusion of that Grace, which was necessary to effect or bring it to pass; and this Promise, or Grant of Grace for the Conversion of Sinners unto Christ, expressed by the *prospering*

of the Work of the Lord in his Hand, was made on the account of his Death, or *making his Soul an Offering for Sin*. For that Offering was a *Sacrifice for a sweet smelling savor unto God*, Eph. 6. 2. for which he was so far reconciled to us, for whom it was made, that he did not only tender a Pardon to us upon our Return unto him, but moreover promised the Assistance of his Grace, to enable us to return; *i. e.* to forsake our Sins so far, as to be accepted by him; and both upon the account of that propitiatory Sacrifice of his Son, which is not only satisfactory for the Offence of Sins when committed, but meritorious too for the obtaining of Grace, to convert us from our Sins, and prepare us for his Service. Gal. 3. 13, 14. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, and that we might receive the promise of the spirit*. Where the Promise of the Spirit, is evidently made a consequent of the Death of Christ; and the receiving of it, one end why he was made a Curse for us: For by his Death, he redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us, that we might receive the Promise of the Spirit, according to those Words of his unto his Disciples, John 16. 7. *it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you*. And John 7. 39. *The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified*. So that his going to his Father, and the following Mission of his Spirit, was not barely a Consequent, but the Purchase of his Death; for, because he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, therefore God highly exalted him to his right hand, where he received the promise of the Holy Ghost, Phil. 2. 8, 9. compar'd with Acts 2. 33. and was fully enstalled in his regal Office, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins, Acts 5. 31. *i. e.* not only to admit us to Repentance and Pardon, but to allow us Means, and afford us Grace, to enable us to repent, and qualify us for his Pardon. And this he doth by the Power of his Word, and Vertue of his Spirit, which he sends on purpose to subdue our Sins, and erect his Throne in our Hearts.

Hearts. And 'tis farther evident from *Heb. 2. 9.* that for the suffering of death, he was crowned with this glory and honour; that is, the Honour and Glory of his Exaltation to the right Hand of God, there to reign till all things were put in subjection to him, *v. 8.* or as 'tis elsewhere expressed, till all his enemies were made his footstool. Since, therefore, our Sins were some of these Enemies to be subdued by him, it clearly follows, that the subduing of them is an Effect and Fruit of his Death, by which he was exalted to his Glory; and merited for us Grace, to assist us in our War and Combate with them.

But to make all this more clear, we are here to consider, that all Grace was made over to us in the Covenant of Grace, established in the Blood of Christ; and that God hath promised in that Covenant to put his laws into our minds, and write them in our hearts, *Heb. 8. 10. i. e.* to convince our Understandings of our Duty, and also to encline our Wills and Affections to perform it; or as 'tis elsewhere expressed, that he would grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hands of our (spiritual) enemies, might serve him in holiness, &c. For so *Zacharias* interprets the holy Covenant and Oath, which God swore unto our father *Abraham*, *Luke 1. 72, 73, 74, 75.* and *Acts 3. 26.* The same Covenant, or rather Blessing promised in it, is again explained to the same purpose, of turning us from our Iniquities. All which Texts manifestly speak of sanctifying Grace, and that too as evidently derived to us through our Saviour Christ, as that the Covenant, wherein it was promised, was established in his Blood.

This Promise of Grace to assist us against our Sins, and fit us for the Service of God, which was made unto us in the new Covenant, established in the Blood of Christ, was the ground of the Apostle's Prayer, *Heb. 13. 20, 21.* the God of grace, who brought again our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight. And 'tis through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, (so the Words in the Greek are connected) that he is the

great Shepherd of the Sheep, for which he gave his life, John 10. 11. and purchased them with his blood, Acts 20. 28. And being raised from the Dead, is ascended into Heaven, to obtain for us Grace, by Vertue of that Blood, to perfect, prepare, and fit us for every good Work, to do the Will of God. It is called the *Blood of the Covenant*, because the Covenant of Grace was established by it; and that Covenant is called Everlasting, because the Blood of Christ, whereby it was established, is of everlasting Vertue, to obtain for us Grace in time of need.

We see then that our Saviour hath obtained for us, by his Death, Grace to assist us against our Sins, and to save us from them. Let us not therefore faint or be dismayed in our Conflicts with them; for after the Kindness and Love of God, our Saviour towards Men appeared; he saved us by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, *which* (saith the Apostle) *he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus our Saviour*, Tit. 3. 4, 5, 6. By the Power of which Holy Spirit, he still weakens the Power of our Sins, giving Strength and Ability to subdue and mortify every rebellious Lust. *Tho' men were dead in trespasses and sins, yet he doth ζωοποιεῖν yet he doth quicken, or make them alive by his grace*, Ephes. 2. 5, 6. So that they, who were dead in sin, became dead unto sin, and alive unto God; i. e. enlivened and raised up from the State of Sin, which is compared unto Death, to do him acceptable Service, and *all this through Jesus Christ*, Rom. 6. 11. For it is through Jesus Christ, through his Merits and Mediation, that we have Grace and Strength afforded to us, to resist and conquer our Sins, and walk acceptably in the Sight of God; for which Reason (I conceive) the Saints, or holy Persons, are said to be *sanctified in Christ Jesus*, 1 Cor. 1. 2.

From these Premises we may safely conclude, that when our Saviour purchased his church with his own blood, Acts 20. 28. he also, by the Merits of the same Blood, obtained for them Grace to redeem them from Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14. that they might serve him in holiness, &c. Luke 1. 74.

And

And thus we see, that the very Death of Christ hath an Influence on our Hearts, to purge and cleanse from the Filth of Sin, as a meritorious Cause; because by his Death he purchased for us the Spirit of Grace and Holiness, to sanctify and renew our Natures, and consequently to reform and amend our Lives, according to the Will of God.

II. *As it is an exemplary Cause.* II. We may be said to be saved from our Sins, or sanctified by our Saviour's Death as an *exemplary Cause*, and that in three respects; for when he died for us, he was an Example for our *Imitation*, for our *Admonition and Warning*, and for our *Resemblance* of him, by way of spiritual Analogy in *dying unto Sin*. The Scripture propounds him not only as *ἱλαστήριον* a propitiatory Sacrifice, but also as *ὑπογραμμός* a Pattern and Example.

By his Sufferings, he left us an Example of First, For our *Imitation*; for besides the forementioned Pattern of his Life, which I shall not now repeat, he gave a most eminent Example of many Christian Vertues, at and about the time of his Death. Which Example is often propounded in his Gospel, for all, that will be his Disciples, to imitate and follow; for, saith the Apostle, *Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. By his Sufferings he left us,

Humility, 1. An Example of *Humility and Lowliness of Heart*; for the *Son of Man* came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many, Mat. 20. 28. Which is there urged by himself as a Pattern of Humility, to check the aspiring Thoughts and ambitious Desires of his Disciples. And the Apostle, Phil. 2. 5. &c. inculcates it again, with other Circumstances of his Condescension, on purpose to enforce his foregoing Dehortation from Strife and Vain-glory; v. 3. *let this mind be in you, which was in Jesus Christ, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

How would the lofty Looks of Man be humbled, and his Haughtiness be bowed down, did he duly consider and lay to heart this wonderful Condescension

sion of the Lord of Life, in humbling himself unto Death, even to the bitter and ignominious Death of the Cross? However, it's manifest, that this Example of Humility is propounded to us for our Imitation, and so,

2. Is his Example of *Meekness* and *Patience* under *Meekness*, Sufferings, which so eminently appeared at his Death, 1 Pet. 4. *forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind, for even hereunto were we called, because Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, &c.* 1 Pet. 2. 21. *i. e.* an Example of *Meekness* and *Patience*, to excite us also to run the race with patience, that is set before us, Heb. 12. 1. and to be content. though through many tribulations we enter, &c. considering our master, who, tho' he endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, v. 3. never did any sin, neither had any guile found in his mouth: yea, when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23. but was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers, opening not his mouth, Is. 53. 7. unless it were to pray for his very Enemies, that most barbarously put him to death. By which,

3. He left us an Example of *Charity*, in forgiving Injuries, and passing by Abuses; for tho' he suffered many, which some would call intolerable Wrongs, yet he patiently took them all, and revenged none, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, 1 Pet. 2. 23. Yea, tho' he could easily and speedily have revenged himself upon the stoutest of his insulting Foes, yet he, full of Mercy and Compassion, exemplified his own Command, of doing good to them that hate us, and praying for them that despitefully use us, Mat. 5. 44. For after all the Indignities offered him, he prayed for his very crucifiers; *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luke 23. 34. To see such Power matched with such Meekness, such Abuses requited with such Kindness, may justly make us blush at all Excess of Anger, and shame us out of all Thoughts of Malice and Meditations of Revenge.

4. By his Sufferings, he left us an Example of *Self-Self-denial*, which he himself propounds unto us for our Imitation;

Imitation, *Mark 8. 34. whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* As if he had said, he that intends to be my Disciple, must not refuse Conformity to his Master ; but as I have denied my self, in waving the Advantages and Pleasures of this present World, and submitting to all the Miseries that I have already suffered in my Life, and ere long to a bitter and reproachful Death, that I might *do the Will of him that sent me, and finish the Work which he gave me to do* ; so he, that will be my Servant and Disciple indeed, having me for a Precedent and Pattern, must be content to follow my Example, and resolve to forego what the World most admires ; contradicting his own Affections and Desires, whenever they contradict his Duty unto me, not regarding what is pleasing to his Lusts, but what is acceptable unto God ; yea, and to be willing to suffer whatever Afflictions and Troubles God shall be pleased to call him to, tho' it be with the Loss not only of worldly Prosperity and Ease, but his very Life ; for to some it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to *believe in his name*, but also to *suffer for his sake*, *Phil. 2. 29.* And as 'tis their Honour to be Companions with him in Tribulations and Sufferings, so 'tis fit they should in Self-denial and Submission too, following him unto the last, tho' Satan tempt, tho' Flesh and Blood gainsay, yea, tho' some Men deride and scorn, and all hate us for his sake. To this purpose I consider,

Obedience, 5. That by his Sufferings he hath set us an Example of Obedience unto God, even in the hardest Points ; for he *became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross* ; which is added by way of Aggravation, to shew the Readiness and Constancy of his Obedience, notwithstanding all the Ignominy and Dolours that attended it. By this he hath set us a Copy of *Passive Obedience* unto God, teaching us by his own Example *to resist even unto blood, striving against sin*, *Heb. 12. 4.* if God should call us to so great a Trial ; for if he *tho' he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered*, *Heb. 5. 4.* we, that are his Servants, must not refuse to follow his Steps.

6. Out

6. Our Saviour by his Death gave us an Example *Faith and Trust*, of *Faith and Trust* in God ; for when, through the Extremity of his Pains, he was giving up the Ghost, he commended his Spirit into his Father's hands, Luke 23. 46. and as he had said before, laid down his Life that he might take it again, John 10. 17. so true was that in the Psalmist, tho' scoffingly applied by the unbelieving Jews, he trusted in God that he would deliver him, Ps. 22. 8. Mat. 27. 43. For being fully assured that the Father would not suffer his Holy One to see corruption, he never doubted of his Deliverance from the Power of the Grave, or his Glory which was to follow ; for through Intuition thereof, he chearfully underwent all that was laid upon him. And this Example is also propounded to us, Heb. 12. 2. where we are exhorted to run the race with patience that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith ; i. e. looking unto, and following his Example, who as our ἀγωνιστὴς Captain and Leader in this Christian Race, endured the Cross, and despised the Shame for the Joy that was set before him. For by this he hath taught us, to despise all the Opposition we meet with in our way to Heaven, to trust in God, and adhere to him, notwithstanding all the Troubles that here befall us, and to persevere unto the end in Belief, and expectation of the Joys that are set before us in his Kingdom : For to look unto Jesus, is not only to behold and observe what he did, but (including the Effect) to transcribe his Copy, and walk in his Steps, who, as he is the Leader, will also be the Crowner of our Faith, if we follow him to the end ; for to such he hath promised a joint Inheritance with him in his kingdom, Rom. 8. 17. And John 12. 16. if (saith he) any man serve me, let him follow me ; and where I am, there also shall my servant be. And again, Rev. 3. 21. to him that overcometh, I will give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. Having therefore such a Precedent, who by his own Example as well as his Promises hath given such strong Supports unto our Faith, we should never faint or be dismayed, tho' the World may threaten us with Sufferings for his sake ; for since we know that his Ser-

vants, who suffer with him, shall also be glorified together, we have cause enough to reckon with the Apostle, that *the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall (once) be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. 17, 18. Which answers to our Saviour's Pattern, *who endured the Cross, &c.* where (I say) his Example is propounded to us to encourage us to Faith, and adhere unto God, in despite of all Opposition from Satan and the World.

and Love
towards
God,

Seventhly and lastly, Christ by his Death hath set us an Example of *Love*, both in respect of God and Man.

1. By his Death he hath set us an Example of *Love* towards God ; for a little before his Crucifixion, being ready to go unto the place where he was betrayed, he said unto his Disciples, *arise, let us go hence*, John 14. 31. where, in the former part of the Verse, he gives the reason of his Readiness to go unto his Death, *that the world (saith he) may know that I love the Father, (&c. &c. or even) as the Father gave me commandment, so I do.* The Commandment whereof he speaketh, was in relation to his Death ; and this he readily obeyed, that the World might know his Love to his Father : For since the Love of God consisteth much in *obedience to his commandments*, 1 John 5. 3. Christ's Love unto his Father, was then in an high and eminent manner demonstrated to the World, *when, to do as the Father commanded him, he became obedient unto death.* And this should teach us how to express our Love towards God ; for the best Demonstration of it, is, with our Saviour, to do as he *has given us commandment* : For this is Love in reality, and Deed, *that we walk after his commandments*, 2 John 7. 6. And the harder the Commandment is unto Flesh and Blood, the better will our Love to God in keeping it appear ; because it is an Argument of Zeal and Fervor in his Service, to contradict our own private Interest and Ease, and refuse no Perils or Pains that he puts us on, that thereby we may testify our Reverence to his Name, and Respect to his Glory. On the contrary, it's a sign of little Love to God, when we cast off his Yoke, and account his Commandments grievous, because they oppose sometimes our Pleasures, sometimes our Profit, and sometimes our

Eate ;

Ease; sometimes our Humours, or Fancies, and sometimes our Safety, but always the corrupt and sinful Appetites of Flesh and Blood. How can we pretend Love unto the Searcher of Hearts, when in our Choice we prefer such inconsiderable Competitors before him? Or how can we in so doing, call our selves the Disciples of his Holy Son, who, out of Love and Obedience to the Commandment of his Father, parted with his Life, to the eternal Shame of such as call him Master, and yet have not so much Love or Respect to God's Commandments, as to make them part with their foolish Lusts?

2. Our Saviour by his Death set us also an Example of Love towards *Man*, and that too in the *and Man*. highest degree, and most eminent manner; for *greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends*, John 15. 13. Hereby then we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, 1 John 3. 16. This exemplary Love of Christ, in dying for us, is often propounded to us in the Gospel for our Imitation; as *Ephes. 5. 1, 2.* where the Apostle exhorts us to be followers of God as dear children, and to walk in love as Christ also loved us, and gave himself for us; for if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another, 1 John 4. 11. And therefore our Saviour himself presseth it upon us, not only by Vertue of his Command, but by the Proposition of his own Example to us, *John 15. 12. this is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* And to shew the Necessity of transcribing that Copy that he hath set us, he makes it the characteristical Note, or Mark of his Disciples, *John 13. 35. by this (saith he) shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.* For the Disciple must be known by his Conformity to his Master: The Disciples of *John*, were known by their Fastings; those of the Pharisees, by their ceremonious Observations; and the Disciples of the ancient Philosophers, by owning their Opinions, and imitation of their Practices. In like manner the Disciples of Christ, must shew themselves to be such by Obedience to his Doctrine, and Imitation of his Example; who was so eminent not only for his Precepts, but also for his Pattern of Love, that out of
his

his abundant Kindness to us, he refused not to submit to a most bitter and ignominious Death for our sakes. This Love of Christ, is yet farther commended to us *in that while we were yet sinners, he died for us, Rom. 5. 8. i. e. as it follows, v. 10. whilst we were enemies unto him.* By which he hath taught us, not to confine our Love only unto Friends, but to extend it unto such, whom we, perhaps, may think most unworthy of it; *i. e. to love our enemies, and do good to them that hate us, Mat. 5. 44.* A Precept there enforced by the Example of our Heavenly Father, *who maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.* To which may well be added the Example of our Compassionate Saviour, who; when we were Enemies, *laid down his Life, to make our peace by the Blood of his Cross, and so reconcile us unto God.*

And thus we see, how great a Variety of Christian Vertues our Saviour hath taught us by his Death, leaving us an *Example*, that we should follow his Steps. And now surely I need not tell you, how much the Example, which Christ hath set us by his Death, tends to the taking of us off from our Sins, since he is become thereby an Example of so many Vertues, and those too, some of them, so large and comprehensive, that our whole Duty to God and Man, may easily be reduced to them; for Love to God and Man fulfils both Tables. Nor need I add, that this Example was intended for a Copy unto us, since it is so often propounded in the Gospel, as a Pattern for all, that will be his Disciples, to imitate and follow. But it will be very proper to represent the Force and Power of his Example, that it may take the better Effect upon our Hearts: And this will best be done, by considering the Majesty and Glory of the Divine Person, who gave and propounded it to us; for the Dignity of his Person, adds a Lustre to his Example, that may justly attract all our Hearts, to endeavour an Imitation of him. So that now we cannot reasonably repine at any Offices of Religion, tho' never so full of Condescension, they being commended to us, not only by the Command, but Example too of the Son of God.

Secondly,

Secondly, Our Saviour's Death was παράδειγμα an Example of Terror for our Admonition and Warning; for by it we are admonished of the Danger of our Sins, and the Severity of God against persevering and contumacious Sinners, who persist in their Enmity against him; and that upon a double Ground. For, *Christ's Death was an Example of Terror, for our Admonition.*

1. If we consider the infinite Love of the Father towards his beloved Son, who never gave the least Offence, but always did such things as pleased him, together with all the Miseries, which, notwithstanding his spotless Innocence, he was subject to; we shall have little reason to imagine, that rebellious Sinners shall escape his Wrath, which is so plainly revealed from Heaven against them: For if it pleased the Lord to bruise and put him to grief, who never did any violence, nor had any deceit found in his mouth, II. 53. 9, 10. can we think that he will spare his Enemies, that delight in nothing more than their Hostility against him? If he was smitten of God, and afflicted, v. 4. who never offended in any Point, how can they expect to go unpunished, who multiply their Offences notwithstanding all the Calls unto Repentance? If the Father used such Rigour against the Son of his Love, what Severity then hath he reserved for such as continue the Children of his Wrath? This Argument our Saviour himself seems to use in that proverbial Speech, Luke 23. 31. for having in the former Verse not obscurely denounced most fearful Judgments against the impenitent Jews, he immediately subjoineth this, as a Confirmation of what he had said; for if they do these things in a green Tree, what shall be done in a dry? Where he is thought to compare himself to a green and fruitful Tree, and the wicked Jews to a dry and fruitless one; and from his own sufferings, to infer the approach of theirs; as if he had said, if it hath pleased God to subject me to so many grievous sufferings, who am his beloved Son, and came into the World on purpose to do his Will, and finish the Work which he gave me to do, what Miseries, think ye, must await wicked and ungodly Men, who by their continued Provocations go on to incense his Wrath against them, and like dry and fruitless Trees, are as it were marked out to be cut down, and made

the Fuel for everlasting Burnings? The like Argument is used by St. Peter, 1 Ep. 4. 17. where he brings the Sufferings of the Faithful, as a Testimony and Example of the Divine Severity in the Judgment of ungodly Men; for he argues thus, *If judgment begin at the house of God, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God?* Much more may we say, if Judgment begin not only at the House, but with the Son of God, what then will become of Aliens and Strangers to him? If he gave so bitter a Cup to his own beloved Son, what Viols of his Wrath will he pour out on such, as continue Enemies unto him? So that the Sufferings of Christ most evidently admonishes us of the Danger of our Sins, as being an Argument of the Severity of God, against stubborn and contumacious Sinners; for they cannot expect that God should spare them, since he spared not his own beloved Son, when the Chastisement of our Peace was laid upon him. The Force of this Argument will better appear, if,

2. We consider that our Sins were the Cause of *all his Sufferings; who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, II. 53. 5.* For these his sacred Head was crowned with Thorns; for these, his Hands and Feet were nailed to the Cross; for these, his blessed Side was pierced with a Spear; for these, he suffered all the Reproaches that his insulting Enemies could devise; and for these, he underwent that unknown Anguish in Body and Soul, which made him cry out, *my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Behold, here, the heinous Nature and dreadful Effects of Sin! For what Horror must there be in that, which brought all these Miseries on the Son of God? Certainly, the Father would never have used so much Rigour against his beloved Son, had not our Sins, for which he suffered, been infinitely abhorred by him. He himself was holy, harmless, and separate from Sinners, infinitely beloved of his Father, *even before the foundation of the world, John 17. 24.* yet to give a great Example of his Hatred to our Sins, and his Wrath against Sinners, God was pleased to lay on him the Iniquity of us all, rather than to let it pass utterly unpunished, and that for the everlasting

lasting Warning and Terror of all presumptuous Sinners for the time to come, who may here most clearly see the Danger of their Sins. For if the Fire that devoured *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the two presumptuous Sons of *Aaron*, was a Demonstration that the Lord would be sanctified in them that come nigh him, Lev. 10. 3. what shall we think of the Sacrifice of the Son of God, who suffered for the Sins of others? If the trembling *Beth-sheemish* cried out, at the Slaughter of above 50 Thousand Men, saying, *who is able to stand before this Holy God?* 1 Sam. 6, 20. how much more may an impenitent Sinner say the like, when he thinks of the Death and Sufferings of Christ, Who can be able to appear before this Holy God, or stand when he is angry? who spared not his own beloved Son, when he made his Soul an Offering for Sin? For if he endured so much, who suffered for others Sins, what must they expect who suffer for their own, especially when they have aggravated their Guilt, by refusing all the tenders of Grace, and treading under Foot that most precious Blood, by which alone we can hope for Pardon? I insist on this the rather, because Men are apt to flatter themselves in their Follies, and will not easily be persuaded, that their beloved Sins, so dear unto themselves, should be so displeasing unto God, and consequently so full of Danger as some would have them think; most hardly will they believe, that they shall ever suffer for them, notwithstanding all the Declamations from the Pulpit, which they hear against them. Those Sons of Thunder, that proclaim *the Wrath of God, revealed against the Unrighteousness of Men*, are looked upon as *Noah* by the old World, when he foretold the approaching Flood, which they thought would never come upon them. Difficult it is to persuade Men, that God is so displeased, as to punish them eternally for their Sins; but they might easily be convinced, would they consider this great Example of his Wrath, which of all that were ever written, is most remarkable for our Admonition: For there's nothing more fully discovers the Heinousness of Sin, nothing more convincingly demonstrates God's dislike and hatred of it, than the Sufferings of his Son

on the Cross; the Drowning of the old World by an universal Deluge, the Destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* by Fire and Brimstone, the Earth's swallowing up *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*; those grand Examples of the Divine Vengeance, whereby God demonstrated his Justice, and hatred of Sin unto the World, were nothing in comparison of the Sacrifice of his own beloved Son, when he was *numbred with transgressors, and bore the sins of many*, *Is. 53. 12.* This was more than if the *Cattel upon a thousand Hills* had been offered in an Holocaust to God; yea, more than if all the World had been laid on a Funeral Pile. Let me add that the very Torments of the Damned, are not a greater Evidence of the Justice of God, and his Hatred of Sin, than the Death of his Son on the Cross; for his Life was of greater Value than the Life of all the Sinners in the World. That, therefore, a Person so high and glorious, so holy and harmless, so dearly beloved of his Father, should suffer so much for Sin, is a greater Argument of its odiousness unto God, than if all the World had suffered for themselves. We read of *Zaleucus*, that when his Son had committed a Crime, for which the Law required that he should lose both his Eyes; that to satisfy the Law, and preserve the Honour of it, he put out one of his Son's Eyes, and another of his own, intending thereby to give such a Demonstration of his Justice, and Severity against future Transgressors, that none might ever presume of Impunity, or think to escape the Penalty of that Law, which he would not dispense with in his own Son. How much more hath God demonstrated his Justice, and declared his dislike and hatred of Sin unto the World, by the Sufferings of his beloved Son, who had no Sin of his own, but only undertook to expiate ours, and make an Attonement for us? For by the Greatness of his Sufferings, God hath given such a Demonstration of his Justice, that may justly make us tremble at the very Thoughts of offending him, who requir'd so full a Satisfaction, and would not pardon, no not a repenting Sinner, without the Blood of Christ for his Expiation: For if the desperateness of the Disease, may be judged of by the preciousness of the Remedy,

we cannot but conclude those Sins most dangerous, from which we were redeemed by the precious Blood of Christ, who his own self *was fain to bear our sins in his own body on the tree*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. The Dignity of his Person, who suffered for our Sins, most clearly shews the Dreadfulness of the Obligation contracted by them. Let us therefore judge of the Sadness of our Condition in our Bondage under Sin, by the Value of the Price, that was given for our Redemption; for that Thralldom must needs be miserable, that required such a Ransome. No wonder therefore that the Apostle urgeth this as an Argument, to persuade us to be holy in all manner of Conversation, and to *pass the time of our sojourning here in fear, forasmuch as we know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ*, 1 Pet. 1. 15, 17, 18, 19. see Rom. 8. 3. I shall conclude this Particular with the Meditation of St. Bernard: "By the Consideration of the Remedy, I judge of the Greatness of my Danger; I once knew it not, but seemed to my self secure, and, behold, the Son of the most High God, was sent to be crucified and slain, that by the Balsom of his most precious Blood, he might heal the Wounds of my Sins. Acknowledge, O Man, the Greatness of those Wounds! for the Cure of which, it was needful for the Lord Christ to shed his Blood; if thou hadst not been wounded to Death, and that too eternal Death, by thy Sins, the Son of God had not died for a Remedy." Thus we see, that the Death of Christ is a manifest Demonstration of the Dangerfulness of our Sins, and consequently a most strong and forcible Argument to take us off and turn us from them.

Thirdly, The Death of Christ was an *Example* also Thirdly, for our *Resemblance*, by way of spiritual Analogy in *An Exam-* dying unto Sin; for we must in a spiritual Sense be *ple for our* conformed to him: i. e. in the Language of the A- *Resem-* postle, *be planted together in the likeness of his death*, *blance.* Rom. 6. 5. *As he died, so likewise must we reckon our* selves to be dead unto sin, v. 11. And as he was cruci- fied, so our old man must be crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we may not serve sin, v. 6. So that Christ's Death upon the Cross

Cross, was designed for many great and excellent Ends, some of which ye have heard already, and more you'll hear hereafter. Among the rest, it was intended for an exemplary Pattern for us, to which we must be conformed by that spiritual Death to Sin within us; which being not only a Resemblance, but an Effect and Fruit of the Cross of Christ, is expressed by our *being dead with Christ*, v. 8. and the Likeness of his Death, v. 5. By which is evidently meant the Mortification of Sin within us, or Crucifixion of sinful Lusts in conformity to the Death of Christ, and by the Power and Efficacy of it. And this is part, at least, of what St. Paul so much desired, when he said, *I account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; i. e. of the experimental Knowledge of him, that he might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death*, Phil. 3. 10. Which last Words will help us to understand the former; for this Conformity to the Death of Christ most clearly shews, that his Death is here considered as a Pattern and Example, to be spiritually resembled by us Christians. And this spiritual Resemblance of, or Conformity to the Death of Christ, is, in the same Verse, called a *Communion or fellowship of his sufferings*: For by Communion or Partnership of the Sufferings of Christ, cannot possibly be meant our bearing part in the Merit or Satisfaction of his Sufferings, as some Romanists have vainly imagined; for as that is a Fancy most shamefully derogatory from the Perfection of our Saviour's Sacrifice, so it directly contradicts all those places of Scripture, which plainly tell us, *that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, Heb. 10. 14. *That he hath obtained eternal redemption for us*, ch. 9. 12. and the like, which constantly ascribe Remission of Sin, Reconciliation with God, and eternal Salvation to Christ alone, as the only meritorious Cause of them all. Neither is this Fellowship of the Sufferings of Christ, to be understood merely of outward Afflictions, or Sufferings in the Body, but of that inward Mortification of corrupt Affections, or Crucifixion of worldly Lusts; which, in the following

Words,

Words, is called a Conformity to the Death of Christ ; for then we are made conformable to his Death, when in a spiritual Sense we die unto Sin : *i. e.* when we have crucified the Flesh with its Affections and Lusts. And that this is the true Meaning of the Apostle in the forecited Text, farther appears, in that there is mention of knowing *the Power of the Resurrection*, as well as *the Fellowship of the Sufferings of Christ* : For as to know *the Power of his Resurrection*, signifies an experimental Knowledge, or feeling the Virtue of it, in raising us from the Death of Sin, to a Life of Righteousness ; so to know *the Fellowship of his Sufferings*, and be made conformable to his Death, must likewise signify the Mortification or Destruction of Sin within us, of which the Death of Christ is propounded as a Figure and Pattern to be resembled by us. By which it is easy to perceive, that there is something to be done, and transacted within us, that is answerable, and bears conformity, to the Death and Resurrection of Christ. For by what hath been now said, it is manifest, that the Apostle there spake not of a mere speculative and historical Knowledge of him, *who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification*, Rom. 4. 25. but of such an experimental Knowledge of the Power of his Resurrection and Sufferings, as consisteth in the Mortification of Sin, or Crucifixion of the old Man, in Conformity to the Death of Christ, and in leading a new and holy Life in resemblance of his Resurrection ; both which are more at large press'd upon all Christians in the 11 first Verses of Rom. 6. But I need not insist on all, and therefore shall conclude this Particular, with the Exhortation of St. Peter, 1 Ep. 4. 1, 2. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind : for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin ; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.* Where the Death of Christ is again proposed to us, as an Example not only of Patience and Submission to the Will of God under Crosses and Afflictions, but of that inward Mortification of Sin, which St. Paul calls *crucifying the old man, and destroying the body of sin,*

sin, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh; i. e. considering that it was for us, viz. for the Expiation of our Sins, and the Procurement of Grace, to enable us to mortify and subdue them; that Christ when he was on Earth suffer'd so much in his human Nature, arm your selves likewise with the same mind, which was in him. As Christ in his Death designed the Mortification and Destruction of Sin, as well as the Pardon of it, so in Pursuance of the same Design, and in Conformity to his Death, do ye resolve, by the mighty Power and Vertue of it, to crucify the Flesh, with its Affections and Lusts; for he that hath suffer'd in the Flesh, i. e. he, in whom the old Man is crucified with Christ, he, who in a spiritual Sense is dead to Sin, or he, that hath suffer'd the Trouble and Contradiction, which must be undergone in the Mortification of carnal Lusts, hath ceased from Sin, hath left his former evil Courses, even as he, that is naturally dead, ceaseth from the Actions of a natural Life. It follows, v. 2. that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God: i. e. that he should not live any longer in the corrupt and sinful Ways of carnal Men, indulging those fleshly Lusts, which enslave the greatest part of Mankind; but on the contrary, should live a Life of sincere Obedience, and Conformity to the Will of God; for how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Rom. 6. 2. The Force of which Argument appears, by the following Words, know ye not that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death, or engaged by our baptism to resemble the death of Christ, in dying unto sin, in mortifying the deeds of the body, in crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts; and to that end, have the Power and Efficacy of the Death of Christ, the cleansing Vertue of his Blood, the renewing Grace that he purchased by his Death, sealed and confirmed to us. Thus it is very manifest, that the Death of Christ was intended not only for a Sacrifice of Attonement for Sins past, but an Emblem too of our dying unto Sin for the time to come: For they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with its affections
and

and lusts, Gal. 5. 24. By him the world is crucified unto them, and they unto the world; Gal. 6. 14. Thus much for the Exemplarity of our Saviour's Death; by which, as we have seen, he gave us an Example for our Imitation, for our Admonition, and for our Resemblance and Conformity to it, by way of spiritual Analogy in dying unto Sin; and in all these respects it hath a manifest Aspect on the Reformation of our Lives.

III. The Death of Christ hath an Influence on our Sanctification, and taketh us off from our Sins as an impulsive Cause, and that too in several respects, besides those already mentioned. As,

First, In respect of its Tendency, to make us hate and abhor our Sins.

Secondly, In respect of the wonderful Love of God, which appeared to us by his Death.

Thirdly, In respect of that Right and Title to us, which he purchased by his Blood.

Fourthly, In respect of the Pardon, which he obtained for us upon our Repentance and Conversion to him.

Fifthly, Because by his Death he sealed and confirmed all that Holy Doctrine, which he brought from God.

Sixthly, Because by Death he destroy'd him that had the Power of it, strengthening our Hopes of Immortality and eternal Life. All which are most plain and powerful Motives, to dissuade and turn us from our Sins, and excite us to his Service.

First, The Death of Christ is a forcible Motive to dissuade us from our Sins, in respect to its Tendency, to make us hate and abhor them. And to make this most evidently appear, we need at present only consider, that our Sins were the Cause of all his Miseries, that they put him to all those Pains, procured all those Sorrows, which he suffered in Body or Soul; they were our Sins that cast him into that Agony, wherein he did sweat as it were Drops of Blood falling to the Ground, that exposed him to all the Contempt and Reproaches of the People, and at last brought him to the Cross, where he died a most painful and tormenting Death. For shall that be

III. Christ's Death sanctifies us, as it is an impulsive Cause.

First, In respect of its Tendency to make us hate Sin.

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Sweet to us, which was so full of *Bitterness* to our Lord? Can we look upon *him*, whom our Sins have pierced, and forbear to mourn? Can we think upon *his Sorrows*, and not be grieved? Can we contemplate his *Bleeding Wounds*, and not feel some Pain? What Heart can be so hard, as not to be sensible of these things? Especially when we consider, that our Sins were the Causes of all his Sufferings: For the serious Consideration hereof, is enough to wound a Heart of Marble, to pierce it through with godly Sorrow, and dissolve it into a Fountain of Tears; to embitter all the Pleasure and Delight that is in Sin, and raise in our Hearts an holy Anger and Indignation against it for ever after. Suppose ye had been in *Golgotha*, and seen him nailed to the Cross, imagin that ye had heard him groaning forth such Words as these: "See how your Sins have used me! look
 " upon my Hands and Feet, which they have pierced:
 " Behold how they have wounded my Body, and
 " entred into my Side; and read in my Wounds the
 " Malice and Cruelty of your Sins! Think what
 " bloody and shameful things they are, which have
 " exhausted my very Blood, and put me to open
 " Shame! Will ye cherish them any longer, now
 " ye see what they have done? Will ye shew them
 " any Kindness after all the Contempt and Miseries
 " they have brought upon your Saviour? O be not
 " so unworthy as to side with these mine Enemies,
 " after I have been so great a Friend to you; but
 " crucify those Sins that have crucified me, that the
 " Body of Sin being destroyed, ye may live unto
 " God, *Rom. 6. 6.* in all thankful Obedience to his
 " Will. How should such Thoughts as these wound
 a pious Heart, and break it with godly Sorrow for
 Sin; yea, and make us hate and abhor it for ever?
 And how unthankful and unworthy must they be,
 with whom the Remembrance of a crucified Jesus,
 with whom the bleeding Wounds of a dying Saviour,
 will not prevail? When we think of his Sufferings,
 we are apt to conceive a natural Hatred and Indig-
 nation at the Treachery of *Judas*, the Injustice of
Pilate, the Malice of the Jews, the Barbarity of the
 Roman Soldiers, and, perhaps, may be much con-
 cerned,

cerned, that he should be used in so barbarous and unworthy a manner; and shall we not be concerned at our Sins, which were the Causes of all that he endured; and far more hateful to him, than those very Enemies that were the Contrivers and Instruments of his Death; yea, more repugnant to his holy Will, than his very Death it self, notwithstanding all the Reproach and Shame, all the Pains and Sorrows with which it was attended? For it plainly follows hence, that Men by their Sins displease him more, than they that nailed him to the Cross, and consequently, in this respect, do him a greater Injury, than those his Enemies who took away his Life. For if the Greatness of an Injury, may be valued by its Opposition to the Will of him that receives it, 'tis evident, that Continuance in Sin, is, in this respect, a greater Injury to Christ, than their putting him to Death; because he was willing to die, but he is not willing that we should live in Sin: Yea, he died on purpose that Sin might be destroyed; so that Sin must needs be more displeasing to him than his very Death, more hateful than all the Pains and Ignominy of the Cross; which may be one Reason, why wicked Men are said to *crucify unto themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame*, Heb. 6. 6. Take heed, therefore, lest by your Sins ye do more than murder the Lord of Life, and grieve him more than did his very Crucifiers in shedding his Blood.

Secondly, The Death of Christ hath an Influence on our Sanctification as an impulsive Cause, or Motive to dissuade us from our Sins, in respect of the wonderful Love of God, which appeared to us by his Death; for Love is of a most prevailing Nature, with all ingenuous and grateful Hearts, to provoke them to Returns of Love to him, from whom they have received any Favour: If, therefore, there be any Ingenuity in our Souls, we must needs confess our selves everlastingly obliged to God; *i. e.* eternally bound to obey and serve him, even out of Love and Gratitude, for his unspeakable and undeserved Kindness to us, in giving his beloved Son to die for our sakes. Therefore the Scripture so often urgeth it as an Argument

Secondly,
In respect
of the wonderful Love
of God,
which appeared to
us by his
Death.

ment to persuade us to Obedience, beseeching us *by the mercies of God*, Rom. 12. 1. and representing to us sometimes the Love of the Father, in sending his beloved Son; and sometimes the Love of the Son, in undertaking the Work of our Redemption; and both to stir up our Affections, and prevail upon our Hearts, that we might return unto him that Love and Obedience required in the Gospel.

Sometimes we are press'd to it by the *love of the Father, which was manifested towards us in sending his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him*, 1 John 4. 9. *For herein was love, even to a miracle; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins*, v. 10, 19. The Apostle shews the Influence, that the Consideration of this wonderful Love of God should have upon our Hearts; *we love him, or as the Original will indifferently bear it, let us love him, who first loved us*; and as another Apostle speaks, *commended his love towards us, in that whilst we were yet sinners Christ died for us*, Rom. 5. 8. For besides that unparelled Expression of his Love, the Precedency of it, as shewn towards us who were so unworthy of it, is very proper to raise in our Hearts the like Affection towards him again.

At other times we are urged by the Love of the Son, *in making his soul an offering for our sins*; as 1 John 3. 16. hereby perceive we the Love of God, because *he laid down his Life for us*. How ungrateful and unworthy should we be, if after so much Kindness we should yet continue unsensible of it? *For greater Love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his Friends*, John 15. 13. The Greatness of which Love of Christ, in laying down his Life for us, is enough to shame us out of our Sins against him, and attract us to his Service; for there are no Cords more strong than those of Love, no Constraint more powerful than Tendernefs and Compassion, no Motives more prevailing with ingenuous Hearts than Favours and Affection. *The Love of Christ constraineth us*, saith the Apostle, *because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead*, 2 Cor. 5. 14. The Consideration of the Love of Christ, in dying for them, and of

the Benefits received by his Death, even constrained them out of Love and Gratitude to live unto him, who laid down his Life, and underwent the Sorrows of Death for their sakes; for his dying for us, supposeth us to have been in a dead and lapsed Condition, liable and obnoxious to eternal Death, and that he died for us to deliver and free us from it. Which Love of his, may well constrain all grateful and ingenuous Hearts unto Returns of Love: The Consideration of it, should, methinks, even force them to Obedience, and make them willing to do or suffer any thing for his sake; this being the surest Testimony of our Love, and best Expression of our Gratitude towards him. Again, *John 14. 15. if ye love me, saith our Saviour, keep my commandments*: As if he had said, if all that I have done, and suffered for your sakes, hath engaged you to me; if the Greatness of my Love towards you, hath kindled in your Hearts the like Affection towards me again, then declare this Engagement, shew this Affection, and express your Love unto me by keeping my Commandments. *For this is the Love of God, that we keep his commandments, saith the Apostle, John 5. 3.* And so saith Christ himself, *he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, John 14. 21.* And again, *v. 23. if as man love me, he will keep my words.*

Join all this together, and ye may easily perceive another forcible Argument, from the Death of Christ, to dissuade us from our Sins; for that Love of God, which so eminently appeared towards us by his Death, is a most strong Inducement and Provocation to Returns of Love; and this Love of ours unto him, must appear in Obedience to his Commands, there being no other way whereby we can better testify our Love and Gratitude to our blessed Maker. His infinite Perfections, render him incapable of any real Advantage from us; for being *God blessed for ever*, he needeth no Contributions from his Creatures to add unto his Bliss; which being unchangeably

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Perfect, can admit of no farther degrees : All that we can do, is to observe his Will, and study to promote his Glory, by yielding Obedience to his Laws, and giving up our selves unto his Service : So that this is all that he expects, because all that we are capable of returning, for his unspeakable Goodness towards us. If we deny him this, we shall be the most ungrateful and unworthy of all his Creatures; for he hath, in a special manner, magnified his Love towards us, in the gracious Work of our Redemption by our Saviour Jesus Christ; who, passing by the fallen Angels, took pity and compassion on us, and readily submitted to a bitter and reproachful Death, to reconcile us unto God, and restore us to that Happiness, which by our Sins we had lost. What Force and Efficacy should this Consideration have upon our Hearts? How can we deny obedient Lives to *him*, who became obedient unto Death for *us*? especially when we consider, that he died for *us*, *that they which live, should not live unto themselves, or in their sins, but to him, or in his service, who died for them,* 2 Cor. 5. 15. To this purpose, I consider,

Thirdly,
In respect
of that
Right and
Title unto
us, which
he purcha-
sed with
his Blood.

Thirdly, That by his Death he purchased a Right unto, and Dominion over us. Rom. 14. 9. *For this end Christ both died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living.* For besides his natural Sovereignty, as he is over all, God blessed for ever, Rom. 9. 5. the Scripture attributes a Lordship and Dominion to him as Man, by a temporal Donation from his Father; in which respect we read, that *God hath made him Lord and Christ*, Acts 2. 36. And that too upon the account of his Death; for because he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, therefore God highly exalted him, and gave him a name above every name, that every tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ is Lord*, Phil. 2. 8, 9, 11. But it is not enough to confess it with our Mouths, if we deny it in our Works; for his Dominion over us, is especially to be acknowledged by our Subjection and Obedience to him: We then own him

him for our Lord, when we behave our selves as his Servants, renouncing the contrary Service of Sin and Satan; for as ye are *his* Servants, to *whom* ye obey, so he is your Lord and Master, *whom* ye serve, Rom. 6. 16. *His servants ye are, to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.* Here, then, we have another Argument, even from the Death of Christ, to turn us from our Sins, and attract us to his Service; for by his Death he purchased us unto himself; and being bought with a Price, we are not our own, but his, who gave it for us, and therefore should glorify God in our body and spirit, which are God's, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. We are his, not only by Right of Creation, but of Redemption too; and being redeemed by him, we are in that respect the Servants of Jesus Christ, in all Equity obliged to do him faithful and perpetual Service, 1 Cor. 7. 22, 23. Let us not therefore abuse the Death of Christ as many do, making it an Encouragement to sin; for when he shed his Blood for the Remission of our Sins, he engaged us to forsake them. By taking off our Obligation unto Punishment, he laid upon us a farther Obligation to new Obedience.

Fourthly, The Death of Christ is a most forcible Motive to turn us from our Sins to God; because thereby he obtained for us a Grant of Pardon, upon our Repentance and Conversion to him; for his Promises of Pardon to returning Sinners, are most powerful Motives to persuade them to Obedience. Were it not for these, we should have small Encouragement to renounce the present World, or to deny our selves any Satisfaction to the eager Desires of Flesh and Blood; for he that despairs of Pardon for past Offences; must needs be much disheartened from encountering the Difficulties of future Service; whereas the Hopes of Favour upon our Reformation, are continual Encouragements and Provocations to it, apt to excite our utmost Diligence, yea, and to make us endeavour to abound in the Work of the Lord; knowing our Labour will

not be lost. Guilt is always suspicious, and makes Men fearful, and ready to fly from God, as from an Enemy that seeks their Destruction; for he that is duly sensible of Sin and Guilt, he that seriously considers what it is to have condemned the Laws of Heaven, and provoked the Almighty to execute Vengeance on him, will be apt to question, whether it be consistent with that Justice, which upholds and governs the World, that so many, so heinous and so inexcusable Transgressions that he hath been guilty of, should be pardoned, and he escape the Punishment due unto him for them. But when withal he calls to mind that wonderful Contrivance of divine Wisdom, Mercy and Goodness, in the Redemption of the World by Christ; when he remembers how the Authority of God's Laws, and the Honour of his Government were fully vindicated; how his Love unto Righteousness, and Hatred of Iniquity, were clearly demonstrated to the World, by the Sufferings of his Son for the Sins of Men, so that God may be just, and yet pardon Sin, and receive into Favour every one that repents, and returns to Obedience: Such Thoughts, like a reviving Cordial, must needs cheer his fainting Heart, and mightily encourage him with all Diligence and Thankfulness, to serve and Honour that gracious and merciful God, who hath been so kind to him. For the end of our Faith in Christ, and the great Sacrifice which he offered for the Expiation of our Sins, is not merely to possess us with a sense of the Divine Favour, or to comfort us with the Hope of Pardon, but that being thus persuaded of God's Design of Mercy towards us, and so delivered from all anxious and tormenting Fear of his Wrath and Justice, we might love him the more heartily, and obey him constantly in the most free and ingenuous manner. Despair always damps the Spirits of Men, and disheartens them in all good Attempts; who would deny himself, cross his natural Inclinations, and refuse all the Pleasures of Sin, if he thought it were to no purpose, and

that he should be never the better for so doing? But when Almighty God makes a Tender of Mercy to returning Sinners, when he invites them to Pardon and Reconciliation with him, through the Death or propitiatory Sacrifice of his Son; when he calls upon them to return to his Favour, and be made happy in the Enjoyment of his Love; what can a rational Man refuse to do, when once sensible of so much Kindness, and the Dreadfulness of continuing under the Divine Displeasure? Who would not presently renounce all the Sins and Vanities of his former Life, in Hopes to have them pardoned, and be at Peace with God, to be adopted into the number of his Children, made a Member of Christ, and Heir of celestial Glory? Who would delay his Repentance any longer, as if he doubted whether it were yet time to have his Sins pardoned, or thought it too soon to be secured from Hell and Misery, and entituled to everlasting Happiness and Glory in Heaven? Certainly this is a most proper and needful Argument, to persuade us to Care and Industry in the Service of God, forasmuch as *we know our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.* Whilst a Sinner distrusts the Kindness, or despairs of the Mercy of God, he must needs be disheartened in the Performance of his Duty to him, as wanting that great Encouragement, which all Men by Experience find to be the Hopes of Acceptation and Reward; but when we are assured of God's Design of Mercy, in calling us to Repentance, when we doubt not of his Readiness to receive us into Favour, on our Return to him, nothing can dismay us in such good Attempts, because nothing can deprive us of the Benefits, but a careless, obstinate and perverse Continuance in our Sins. Now 'tis the Propitiation made by the Death of Christ, and the Love and Kindness of God towards us through him, that gives us this Assurance of Pardon, and Acceptation on our Return to Obedience. Without the Propitiation made by Christ, the serious Contemplation of God's Holiness and Justice, together

with his infinite Majesty and Greatness, would have greatly disturbed, if not quite overthrown those Hopes, which sinful Man could have derived from the Contemplation of his Goodness and Mercy : For when we had violated his Laws, and offended the glorious Majesty of God, *in whom we live, move, and have our being* ; when we had broken all Engagements, and despised all Obligations to Obedience, and abused all his Mercies, by turning them into Wantonness, what could we in reason have expected, but that Wrath and Vengeance, which we had so justly deserved by our Follies. It might reasonably have seemed an Affront unto God's Holiness and Justice, to have flattered our selves from his Clemency, into Hopes of Pardon for those manifold Provocations, of which we have been guilty before him. And this seems to have been the Case of those in the Prophet, who, under a sense of their own Guilt, and Remorse of Conscience, are brought in crying thus ; *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high God ? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old ? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oyl ? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul ?* Mic. 6. 6, 7. This also seems to have been the Case of all those barbarous Nations, who thought to atone the Deity by human Sacrifices, and other superstitious Inventions of guilty and trembling Consciences. Fain would they be eased of their Fears ; fain would they disburthen their Consciences of that heavy Burthen of Guilt, which lay upon them : But still they were at a loss, till the Word of Reconciliation by the Blood of Christ, was published to the World.

For ever blessed therefore be his holy Name, who hath loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, who died that we might live, who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, that by his stripes we might be healed ; and welcome the glad Tidings of Recon-

ciliation through his Blood, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation for the Sins of all that truly believe, and return unto him by Repentance. This is the main Foundation of our Christian Hope; this is the grand Encouragement to return unto our Duty, that notwithstanding Mens Apostacy from God, and manifold Rebellions against him, and the Condemnation they were liable unto, for their numberless Violations of his Law, yet God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself; and in consideration of his most perfect Sacrifice, hath established an everlasting Covenant of Grace, wherein he hath assured us, that he will not only pardon all such as unfeignedly repent of their Mis-doings, and sincerely return unto their Duties, but that he will moreover reward them *with eternal life*, and Blessedness in Heaven, if they *continue patient in well doing*, Rom. 2. 7. And what more imperious Inducement can there be, to persuade us to forsake our Sins, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World, than this Persuasion and Assurance, that we shall then be graciously accepted, and so abundantly rewarded in the other? Such Assurance of the Love and Kindness of God towards Man, will create in us good Thoughts of God, and be a continual Encouragement to pursue all such Courses, as we know are well pleasing to him. Since, therefore, this Love of God was manifested in giving his Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins, and all our Hopes of Mercy to penitent Believers, are founded on that propitiatory Sacrifice, which he offered for us; the great Motive and Encouragement to Repentance, and Reformation of Life, is apparently derived from his Death. And indeed any body may see, from the constant Method, of God's Treaties with the sinful World, that he never dealt with them out of mere Sovereignty and Dominion, but in a way of Mercy and Condescension; for he never called them out of their evil Ways, without inviting them at the same time unto Pardon; sending unto them *Embassadors of Peace*, on

purpose to pray and beseech them to be reconciled to him, 2 Cor. 5. 20. Now if there be any Efficacy in the Manifestation of God's Love and Favour to returning Sinners; if the Tenders of his Grace, have any Force or Power in them to bring Men to Repentance, then the Sufferings and Death of Christ, must needs be a forcible Motive to turn us from our Sins, because that Covenant was established in his Blood, wherein all the gracious Invitations and Encouragements to Obedience are contained. We can have no greater Assurance of Pardon, than from the Blood of Christ, *which was shed for the Remission of Sins*, provided always that we perform the Conditions of that Covenant, wherein this Pardon is tendred to us. Amongst which Conditions, Repentance from dead Works is most frequently required, not only in the preparatory Sermons of the Baptist, but by the Apostles of our Lord, by himself, by his seventy two Disciples, and all their Successors, that ever understood their Office. Our Saviour himself *came to call sinners to repentance*, Mat. 9. 13. and told them plainly, *that except they did repent, they should perish*, Luke 13. 3. John prepared his Way, by *Preaching the Baptism of Repentance for the remission of sins*, Mark 1. 4. And his Apostles did the like, exhorting Men to repent, and be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins, Acts 2. 38. And again, in the following Chapter, St. Peter admonished the Jews to repent, and be converted, *that their sins might be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. implying, that unless they did repent, their Sins would remain as Debts uncanceled in the Register of Heaven, and the Obligation unto Punishment continue in force against them. By which, and many other places, it is apparent, that Repentance is required, even in the Gospel, as an indispensable Condition of Pardon, from all that are in a Capacity of Performance. So that in all the Offers of Mercy unto the World, his is never to be forgotten; for the Design of God in tendring Pardon to Penitents, is to bring them to forsake their Sins, and reduce them to his Service.

And

And nothing now can debar us from his Favour, but a wilful Refusal of his infinite Kindness, by an impenitent Continuance in our Sins; for he hath assured us, by the Death of his beloved Son, and by a solemn Oath and Covenant established in his Blood, that he hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked should turn from his way, and live, Ezek. 33. 11. and that when he turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive, ch. 18. 27. By this we may easily perceive, how much the Sufferings of Christ do tend to dissuade us from our Sins, because by his Death the Covenant of Grace was established, wherein all the gracious Invitations and Encouragements to Repentance are contained.

Let me only add, that if all these will not prevail, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. For if he that despised Moses's law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the son of God, and counted the blood of the Covenant, whereby he should have been sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of Grace? Heb. 10. 27, 28, 29. Which Words, tho' they were originally spoken of Apostates from the Faith, may not unfitly be applied to prophane or hypocritical Professors of it; for to hold the Truth in Unrighteousness, or to continue in the impenitent Practice of Sin, so strictly prohibited in the Gospel, is in effect to tread under foot the son of God, and count the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, notwithstanding an external Profession to the contrary; for as God may be denied, Tit. 1. 16. so the son of God may be trodden under foot, or despised by Men's Works, when they regard not his Authority, but contemn and trample on his Holy Laws. For the same Reason, they may be also said to count the blood of the Covenant an unholy or common thing, because

because they violate the Holy Covenant, tho' established by his Blood; *i. e.* because by Continuance in their Sins, they go the way to make it void, and of none effect unto their Souls, unless it be to aggravate their Guilt, and encrease their Punishment in the Day of Account. Which that it may not do,

Fifthly,
Because by
his Death
he confirm-
ed all the
Doctrine
he brought
from God.

Fifthly, Let us consider, that our Saviour's Death is also a strong and forcible Motive, to dissuade us from our Sins, because by it he confirmed and sealed the Truth of all his Holy Doctrine, wherein he said so much against them. He did not only reveal unto us the Will of God, requiring Obedience to it upon pain of eternal Death, and propounding the Joys of Heaven and Immortality, as our Encouragement and Reward, but sealed the Truth of all with his own most precious Blood, giving us thereby a most undoubted Assurance of the divine Original of what he taught. Hence it is, that he is called *the faithful and true witness*, Rev. 3. 14. A *Witness*, because he laid down his Life as a *Martyr*, in testimony of the Truth, which he brought from God. And *Faithful and True*, not only because he was the Fountain and Revealer of eternal Truth, but also because he so confirmed it unto us; for *μάρτυς* is thought by some to be as much as *ἀξιόπιστος*, one worthy to be believed, one on whom we may with confidence rely on; whose Truth we cannot reasonably question, since he endured so much in confirmation of it. When before *Pontius Pilate*, he *witnessed a good confession*, 1 Tim. 6. 13. *i. e.* gave Testimony to the Truth of what he taught, even to the loss of his Life, and so sealed it with *his Blood*. For which Reason, his Blood is urged by another Apostle, as *one of the Three that bear witness on earth*, 1 John 5. 8. and is elsewhere called *the blood of the New Testament*, Mat. 26. 28. or *the everlasting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20. Because by it the New Testament was sealed, or the everlasting Covenant of the Gospel established and confirmed.

Now that *one* Design of this everlasting Co-
venant,

venant, was to convert us from our Sins to God, appeared before from one great part of its Contents. That which is here farther to be noted is, that the whole Doctrine of Christ, that is, all that he said against our Sins by way of Precept, Promise, or of Threat, was confirmed by his Death: So that they, who will not believe him upon his Word and Works, have this farther Argument of Conviction, that he affirmed nothing which he did not constantly maintain, even to the loss of his Life. If, therefore, the Promulgation of his Holy Laws unto the World; if the Proposition of eternal Rewards and Punishments, may have any Influence upon Men's Hearts; if the Revelation of God's Love unto Holiness, and his Hatred to their Sins, be of any Force to attract them to his Service; if the Assurance of an universal Resurrection from the Dead, and a Day of eternal Judgment, (*Heb. 6. 2.*) wherein he will render to every one according to his works, may be thought good Arguments, to persuade the Amendment and Reformation of their Lives: Yea, lastly, if the certainty of everlasting punishment to the wicked, and of everlasting life and happiness to the righteous, *Mat. 25. 46.* be likely to prevail, then ye may easily perceive, whither the Sufferings of Christ do tend, since he hath assured us upon his Death, that both he and this Doctrine came from God; for needs must his Sufferings tend to reclaim us from our Sins, when by them he confirmed the Truth of all his Doctrine, wherein he said so much against them.

Sixthly, The Death of Christ is proper to dissuade us from our Sins, because by Death he destroyed, or frustrated, him, who had the power of his Death; i. e. the devil; and delivered them, who he destroyed through fear of death, were all their life-time subject unto bondage, *Heb. 2. 14, 15.* For by destroying the Devil, who had the Power of Death, I suppose two things are meant. 1. Our Saviour's Victory over Satan, by which he cast out that Prince of this World, *John 12. 31.* from the Exercise of that Tyranny and Power, which before he usurped over

Sixthly,
Because by
him that
had the
Power of
Death.

over the Sons of *Adam*, to enslave them to himself in all manner of Sin and Wickedness, and so to involve them in eternal Death and Misery. And, 2. Our Saviour's *abolishing Death it self*, *2 Tim. 1. 10.* or making void its Power over us, by a Resurrection to a glorious and immortal Life, and so delivering us from that Bondage, or most servile State, to which the World was subject, through the Fear and Terrors of Death. Both which Considerations are of great Force and Power to dissuade Men from their Sins: For,

1. By our Saviour's Victory over Satan, we are encouraged to resist his Temptations, in assured Hopes of success: Tho' we wrestle *not against flesh and blood (alone) but against principalities and powers*, *Eph. 6. 12.* this should not dishearten or dismay, but on the contrary, animate and excite us to Diligence and Courage, since the Captain of our Salvation hath spoiled those mighty Enemies, *and triumphed over them in his cross*, *Col. 2. 15.* As he hath weakned their Power, and laid such Restraints upon them, that they cannot hurt us, without our own Consents, so he hath purchased for us such Aids of Grace, that, whilst we are mindful of our Duty, we may with the Apostle be persuaded, that they shall not be able to *separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ*, *Rom. 8. 38, 39.* This then is the Christian's Comfort and Security, against the Malice of Satan, and all the Powers of Darkness, that Christ by his Death hath already overcome them, and is ready to afford us Help to withstand their Assaults. Upon which Grounds, we are exhorted *to be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might: to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*, *Eph. 6. 10, 11.* For the Hope of Success and Victory, are mighty Encouragements to *resist the devil stedfast in the faith*, *1 Pet. 5. 9.* to stand out against all his Attempts upon us, and to watch diligently against all his Wiles and Snares, by which he seeketh to entice us into Sin, and so betray us to Death and Misery. Again,

as our Saviour, by his Death, conquered Satan, and invalidated his Strength and Power, by which he endeavours our Death and Ruin; so he hath also,

2. Abolished Death it self; for he died to redeem us from it, and bring us to eternal Life. And that this (not excluding the forementioned way) is meant by *destroying him who had the power of death*, I am induced to believe from two other Texts, wherein the same original Word is used. One is 2 Tim. 1. 10. where we read, *that our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.* The other is, 1 Cor. 15. 26. where, amongst all the Enemies to be put under his Feet, the Apostle tells us, *the last enemy to be destroyed is death.* The first place, I suppose, being meant of his abolishing Death meritoriously by his Passion, when he died to redeem us from it: And the other, of destroying it actually by the Resurrection, when he will raise all his Members out of the Grave, and crown them with eternal Life. For in both these Senses, he may properly be said to *destroy him that had the power of death*; because to abolish, or destroy Death it self, either of these ways, is in effect the same as to evacuate the Power of Satan, which he had concerning Death, after the Entrance of Sin into the World. And thus hath Christ by his death delivered them, who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject unto bondage: i. e. from that servile State, wherein they lived, through the Fear and Terrors of eternal Death, deserved by their Sins, because he hath made an Attonement for them, and so deprived Death of his sting, and will at last swallow it up in victory, 1 Cor. 15. 54. *redeeming us from death, and ransoming us from the power of the grave,* Hos. 13. 14. by raising our very Bodies to eternal Life. Now as this is the Fruit and Purchase of the Death of Christ, so 'tis a most strong and mighty Argument, to persuade us to renounce our Sins, and follow him unto the last, notwithstanding all the Opposition

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we meet with from Satan or the World. And therefore, 1 Cor. 15. 57. the Apostle having asserted this Victory over death through our Lord Jesus Christ, thence exhorts us to be *stedfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Thus I have somewhat largely shewn, that tho' Christ came to save Sinners, it was not to favour their Sins, but to destroy them, and save us from them. Not only his wonderful Incarnation, his holy Doctrine, his convincing Miracles, and the holy Example of his Life, but his very Death also was intended to save and deliver us not only from Wrath and Punishment, but from our Sins too, from the Dominion and Practice of them, that we might serve him in *righteousness and holiness before him all the days of our life*, Luke 1. 74. Yea, it is plain from the Scriptures, that this later, *i. e.* Deliverance from Sin and Wickedness, was the next and immediate End of his Death; Deliverance from Guilt and Punishment, being a consequent of Deliverance from Sin and Wickedness; for we must *first repent and be converted, before we can expect that our sins should be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19.

6.
The Design
of Christ's
Resurre-
ction, was to
deliver us
from the
Dominion
of Sin.

Let us pass in the next place to the Resurrection of Christ, and we shall find that in this also God designed the Reformation of the World, or the saving us from a sinful and a vicious Life; so that Peter told the Jews at Jerusalem, Acts 3. 26. *God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.* Which Words, tho' they may refer to God's raising up *this horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David*, Luke 1. 69. that is to sending his Son Jesus Christ into the World to save us from our Sins, as appears by v. 22. yet doubtless they have a respect also to his Resurrection from the Dead, and Ascension into Heaven, from whence he imparted all those Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit, which by his Death he had purchased, for the Conversion of the

the sinful World. I have already shewn, how both the Death and Resurrection of Christ, are urged in the Scripture as an exemplary Pattern for us, to which we must be conformed *by dying unto sin, and walking in newness of life.* But besides all this, the Resurrection of Christ is one great Foundation of our Christian Faith; for if *Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain,* 1 Cor. 15. 14. For as the Apostles were Witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, and preached it wherever they came, so 'tis evident, that they urged it as the great Confirmation of the Christian Faith. By Christ's Resurrection, we are assured that he was the Son of God: So St. Paul expressly tells us, that he was declared *to be the son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead,* Rom. 1. 4. By this we are assured of the Truth of all he taught; by this we are confirmed in the Belief of our own Resurrection at the last Day: *For Christ, risen from the dead, became the first fruits of them that sleep,* 1 Cor. 15. 20. For as the Offering of the first Fruits under the Law sanctified the whole Harvest, so Christ by his Resurrection, made way for the future Resurrection of all his Members. Accordingly, it follows, *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive,* v. 22. Yea, by Christ's Resurrection we are assured farther, that he shall be our Judge at the last Day; *Acts 17. 31. God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* If, therefore, a firm Belief of the divine Authority of the Gospel; if a stedfast Persuasion of the Truth of all that holy Doctrine, which is contained in it; if the Certainty of the future Resurrection of our Bodies from the Grave, and the Assurance of eternal Judgment, have any Force or Efficacy in them to dissuade Men from their Sins, so must the Resurrection of Christ likewise, since by it all these Truths are confirmed to us. Blessed therefore be
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the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath thus begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all good christians, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

7.
His Ascension into Heaven, was designed for our Reformation.

As his Resurrection from the Dead, so his Ascension into Heaven, and continual Exercise of his everlasting Priesthood in the celestial Sanctuary, were likewise designed for the carrying on this Work of Reformation in the World. 'Tis from the Ascension of Christ, and our Obligation to a Resemblance of it, that the Apostle exhorts us to ascend after him in our hearts, by setting our affections on things above, and not on things on the earth, Col. 3. 1, 2. If ye be risen with Christ; i. e. if you are true Christians, such as are really raised from the Death of Sin, to a new Life of Righteousness, according to your Baptismal Profession, ch. 2. 12. seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. And 'tis from the everlasting Priesthood of our Saviour in Heaven, that we are elsewhere exhorted to Constancy and Perseverance in our Christian Profession, and encouraged to seek unto God, for his gracious Help in all our Needs; Heb. 4. 14, 15, 16. seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the son of God, let us hold fast our profession: For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin: Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need. Furthermore, it was when our Saviour ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, that he gave gifts unto men, Eph. 4. 8. then he bestowed on them those Gifts and Graces, which were necessary for the Conversion of the sinful World; then was that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel eminently fulfilled, And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, Acts 2. 16, 17. It's the Office of Christ glorified, to send the

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the Holy Spirit into Believers Minds, to write the Substance of his Law on their Hearts, possessing them with such holy and heavenly Inclinations, that it may become, as it were, a natural Law unto them, and they obey it with Love, Easiness, and Delight, tho' not in Perfection till they come to Heaven. For this Reason he told his Apostles, *it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you,* John 16. 17. And in ch. 7. v. 39. we are told, *that the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.* So that the giving of the Holy Ghost, or that more plentiful Effusion of Grace, which was vouchsafed to the Christian Church, was a consequent of our Saviour's Ascension into Heaven; and his powerful Intercession for us there, at the Right Hand of God. And this leads me to the

8.

Eighth Particular, For our Saviour's sending the Holy Ghost to excite us to our Duty, and assist and comfort us in the Performance of it, is a farther and unquestionable Evidence of his holy Deed, of saving us from our Sins; for to what End doth Christ send the Holy Spirit into Believers Hearts? is it not to enable them to mortify the deeds of the flesh, Rom. 8. 13. and to purify their souls, by helping them to obey the truth, 1 Pet. 1. 22. 'Tis the very Office of the Holy Spirit, to sanctify or make us holy: Therefore the Work of Sanctification, is called *the sanctification of the spirit,* 2 Thess. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. and *the renewing of the Holy Ghost,* Tit. 3. 5. And they, on whom that Work was wrought, are said to be *sanctified by the spirit of God,* 1 Cor. 6. 11. Yea, for this Reason, he is called *the Holy Spirit*; for tho', as God, he is essentially Holy in himself, and may be stiled Holy, to distinguish him from created Spirits, which are either actually unholy, or else of an inferior and derived sanctity; yet I conceive that he is chiefly called the Holy Spirit, because of the Three Persons in the blessed Trinity, it is his peculiar Office to sanctify, or make

The Mission of the Holy Ghost was for the same end.

Whose peculiar Office it is to

Which Consideration is of great Force. *us holy.* Which Consideration is of mighty Force, both to awaken us out of our Sins, and to encourage us to Holiness in all manner of Conversion.

First, To awake us out of our Sins. *First,* To awaken us out of our Sins; for to continue in sin, to live in any forbidden Practices, is to resist the Holy Ghost, to quench and grieve that blessed Spirit, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, Eph. 1. 13, 14. 'tis to cross and oppose him in his gracious Office, and the ready way to deprive our selves of those needful Aids and Comforts, which are tendred through him in the Gospel. Besides, it is to be considered, that we Christians are consecrated to him, as his Temple and Habitation; 1 Cor. 3. 16. *know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.* It follows, if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy, for the temple of God is holy; which temple ye are. The Meaning is, that the Church of Christ is a spiritual and holy Temple, consecrated to God as his Habitation through the Spirit, and never to be prophaned or polluted with corrupt Doctrines or Practices; Allusion being made to the ancient Temple at Jerusalem, wherein God was said to dwell, because there he vouchsafed his special Presence, there he Blessed and gave Answers to his People, for that Temple was a Type of the Christian Church, in which the Holy Spirit was to dwell; and this Dwelling of the Holy Ghost in the true Members of the Christian Church, makes them the temple of God, or of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6. 19. In the former Text, ch. 3. 16. he calls the Church of Corinth the Temple of God, and useth it as an Argument to dissuade them from Divisions and Dissentions, because by them this Temple of God would be defiled, and in danger to be destroyed. But in this sixth Chapter, v. 19. he calls the Members of that Church the temple of the Holy Ghost, and useth it as an Argument to dissuade them from the Sin of Fornication; and the Argument will hold against all other Pollutions of Flesh

Flesh or Spirit, for they are a defiling the temple of God; and if any man defileth his temple, him will God destroy; so much is he displeased with Impurity and Wickedness in those, amongst whom he hath vouchsafed to dwell.

Secondly, This Consideration of its being the Secondly, Office of the Holy Spirit to sanctify or make us *To encourage us to* holy, is proper to encourage us *to pursue the ways of holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord; Holiness in all manner of Conversation.* for when the Divine Spirit, even the Third Person in the blessed Trinity, is become our Assistant, and is always ready to help our Infirmit-
ties, and enable us to withstand the Temptations of the World, and assist us in the Performance of whatever Duties are required of us in the Gospel, in order to Salvation, how can we reasonably grudge or complain of Severity or Hardship in them? God is no hard Master, he doth not gather, where he hath not sowed; nor reap, where he hath not sown: Tho' he give not Talents to all alike, but to some more, and some less, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, yet he is wanting to none, who sincerely seek unto him; Eph. 4. 7. to every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. No Duty is required of us, but God himself is engaged for our Assistance: Must we cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God? 2 Cor. 7. 1. He hath promised to pour clean water upon us, and cleanse us from our iniquities, Ezek. 36. 25. Must we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling? It is God that worketh in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure, Phil. 2. 12, 13. Must we be faithful unto death? Rev. 2. 10. The Lord is faithful, who hath promised to establish us, and keep us from evil, 2 Thess. 3. 3. So that if we are not shamefully wanting to our selves, yea, if we do not unthankfully grieve and quench the holy Spirit of God, by wilful and presumptuous Sins, we have all the Assurance that we can reasonably desire, that he will never leave nor forsake us, Heb. 13. 5. but will continually assist us in
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the Performance of our Duty, and enable us to live in acceptable Subjection and Obedience to his holy Laws. And to engage us the more carefully and constantly so to do, 'tis farther to be observed, in the

9. *Our Saviour's Institution of the Sacraments for the same end.* *Ninth place,* That our Saviour instituted two Sacraments, to continue for ever in his Church; for the Sacraments of the Gospel are not mere Ceremonies or Badges of our Christian Profession, but Obligations and Engagements to lead Christian Lives; that is, to pursue the End of our Saviour's coming into the World, by heartily renouncing, and really forsaking our Sins, from which he came to rescue and deliver us. And for this Reason they are called *Sacraments*; for the Word of old signified the *Military Oath*, which Souldiers took to be faithful to their Generals, and to do all such things which the Discipline of War required of them: And for that Reason was by the ancient Christians very aptly applied to those sacred Institutions of Christ, wherein he requires us to promise Fidelity to him, as the Captain of our Salvation, and manfully to fight under the Banner in that holy Warfare, to which he hath called us by the Gospel.

I. Baptism. *First,* 'Tis not without sufficient Ground in Scripture that we are taught to acknowledge, that in Baptism we did promise and vow to *for-sake the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.* Secondly, *To believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith.* And Thirdly, *To keep God's holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of our Life.* For,

First, The Contents of this Triple Vow are the Sum of Christianity, or an Abridgment of that Religion, that was taught us by Jesus Christ our Lord: So that if we consider Baptism, as in Baptism, undoubtedly it is a Rite or Ceremony of Initiation, whereby we are first admitted to the Name and Priviledges of Christians, we must be forced to acknowledge it a Solemn Engagement

to all the Duties of that Religion, into which we are admitted by it. Unless therefore there be any thing contained in this Baptismal Vow, which is not required in the Christian Religion; that is, unless a Man can be so vain as to imagine that Christ hath given him Leave to continue in Slavery to the Devil, and in Enmity unto God by wicked Works; or that he is still at Liberty to pursue the Pumps and Vanities of this wicked World, and gratify the sinful Lusts of the Flesh; or that he may safely dis-believe any certain Article of the Christian Faith, or refuse to observe God's Holy Will and Commandments, whenever his Profit or his Pleasure solicits him to transgress them; unless, I say, a Man can be so absurd, as to say the Christian Religion tolerates such apparent Wickedness, or that it doth not oblige us really to believe and do as is expressed in our Baptismal Promise, he must of Necessity confess, that Baptism, which is a solemn Entrance or Admission into this Religion, is likewise an Obligation and Engagement to all that is contained in that sacred Vow, wherein our Christianity is summarily comprehended. For, as under the Mosaical Dispensation, he that was *circumcised* became a debtor to do the whole law, Gal. 5. 3. so now, under the Reformation made by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, he that is *baptized*, is thereby become a Debtor to believe, and do, all that is taught or commanded in the Gospel. Accordingly we find, that when our Saviour gave Commission to his Apostles to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; he at the same time gave it strictly in their Charge, that they should teach them to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them, Mat. 28. 19, 20. Which in other Words is the very same as to keep God's Holy Will, &c. And,

Secondly, That every baptized Person stands engaged by his Baptism so to do, is sufficiently manifest by the very Form of Baptism prescribed by our Saviour; for to be baptized into the holy Will, name &c.

name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is a solemn Acknowledgment of God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, owning him for our God, to be loved, worshipped and obeyed by us in all things, sufficiently made known to be his Will; and of God the Son, as our Lord and Saviour, to adhere unto his Doctrine, rely on his all-sufficient Sacrifice for the Remission of our Sins, and to live in Conformity to those holy Laws, which he hath given in his Gospel; and of the Holy Ghost, as our Sanctifier, Conductor, and Guide in all our Actions. For certainly Christian Baptism is not an empty Ceremony, but a solemn Profession of Faith in the Holy Trinity, and undertaking of that Religion, which was delivered unto us from God the Father, by the Ministry of his Son, and the Power of the Holy Spirit; the Sum of which, consists in a serious Abrenunciation of all sinful Practices, and a steadfast Resolution to believe and live as we are taught and commanded in the Gospel. This will be the more clear, if,

Thirdly,
As it is a
Federal
Rite.

Thirdly, We consider Baptism as a *Federal Rite*, or Seal of the Covenant of Grace; for then it will appear to be on our parts a solemn Entrance into Covenant with God, a Dedication of our selves unto him and his Service by a sacred Vow, and Engagements to continue therein unto our Lives end: For the Covenant of the Gospel being a mutual Agreement between God and Man, containing certain Conditions to be performed on our parts, as well as Benefits to be received from God; Entrance into this Covenant must needs include an Obligation and Engagement to perform the Conditions required in it. Which Conditions are summarily comprehended in the three Branches of our Baptifmal Vow; namely, in the Abrenunciation of Sin and Wickedness, and a Profession of Faith in Christ, and Obedience to his Laws and Government. These things are very plain and evident, for whoever enters into any Covenant with God or Man, doth thereby undertake, and oblige himself, to the Performance

mance of whatsoever Terms or Conditions are expressed in it; and upon the faithful Discharge of that his Undertaking, is to expect the Benefit of it. All will yet be more manifest, if we consider,

Fourthly, That Baptism was anciently in use *Fourthly*, among the Jews, even before the time of *John Borrowed* the Baptist; for washing with Water, being a *from the* Rite naturally apt to represent Purgation from *Jews*. Sin and Wickedness, and the Entrance upon a new and holy State of Life, it was practised by the ancient Jews in admitting Profelytes into their Religion. So that, as divers learned Men have often observed, our Saviour, in the Institution of Baptism, innovated as little as he could, but only accommodated this proper and significant Usage to the purposes of his Gospel; translating Baptism from the Jews, and continuing it for a solemn and sacred Rite, in the Admission of Profelytes into his Religion; even as at the first Institution of his Holy Supper, he made use not only of the Bread and Wine, but of the accustomed Phrases too, which the Jews used at the Passover. For so his Wisdom thought it meet, rather to make former Rites serve his own Ends, than to introduce strange and unheard of things, which had not been known in former Times, his Design being not Novelty, but the good of Men.

'Tis farther observed, that Washing was used by other Nations as well as by the Jews, as a religious Ceremony of Initiation into the Mysteries which they taught; so that 'twill not be easy to nominate any other Rite more likely to be received than this. And it is not improbable, that natural Reason might dictate the Use of it both to Jews and Gentiles; for Sin, by reason of its Loathsomeness to guilty and awakened Consciences, having got the Repute and Name of Filth and Pollution, what could better represent Purification and Cleansing from it, than washing with Water, which was the usual way of Cleansing in other Cases? 'Tis true, the Jews had

divers Washings prescribed in the Law of *Moses*, to cleanse them from Legal Uncleanesses; and they had several Calls to Repentance by the Prophets, under the figurative Expression of *Washing, Purging, and Cleansing themselves from Sin and Wickedness*: All which might direct them to the Use of Baptism in the publick Admission of Profelytes into their Religion, it being a Ceremony so naturally significant and fit to represent that real Purity of Heart and Life, which their Religion required of all that made Profession of it. God himself made use of the Similitude, calling upon them *to wash and make themselves clean*, when he exhorted them to repent, and *put away the evil of their doings from before his eyes*, II. 1. 16. The Jews indeed made Baptism as ancient as *Moses*, deriving it from that Command of God, *Exod. 19. 10.* where *Moses* was enjoined to *sanctify the Israelites, and cause them to wash their cloaths*, against their entring into Covenant with God at Mount *Sinai*. Which, tho' it may not seem a sufficient Proof of a Divine Institution, yet, upon the forementioned Grounds, it might afterwards be introduced by the Advice of their Governours, and Approbation of the Prophets, whom God raised up amongst them. But whatever was the first Original of it, it's sufficiently proved from the Jewish Rabbies, that the Males, even of the Native Jews, were of old entred into the Jewish Religion by Baptism, as well as by Circumcision and Sacrifice; and the Females, who were incapable of Circumcision, by Baptism: And that the Males of the Profelytes of Justice, who submitted to the Yoke of the Mosaical Law, were likewise admitted by Baptism, as well as Circumcision and Oblation; and the Females by Baptism and Oblation only. That at this Baptism of Profelytes there were Men appointed to preside over them; and as they were Baptizing, to explain to them some of the Precepts of the Law. That when this Baptism was rightly performed, it was not afterwards ever to be repeated; that in what Condition soever Profelytes were baptized, whether in a servile or free Condition,

dition, in that they were to abide. That from the time of their being profelyted by Baptism, they were accounted of as Persons New-born, being entred into a new State of Life, insomuch, that they were now stiled Jews, and from the time of this their new Birth, were not to own any of their former Relations. To this Notion our Saviour seems to have had respect, when, *John 3. 3.* he said, *except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*; which, *v. 5.* is interpreted of being *born of water and the spirit*. And for the same Reason he might wonder, that *Nicodemus, a master in Israel, should be ignorant of these things*; the Notion of being born again, being not strange unto the Jews, who applied it to Profelytes, when converted from a sinful to a new and holy State of Life: For becoming as it were new Men, that happy Change was not unfitly expressed, by the metaphorical Phrase of a new Birth.

This Practice of the Jews, in admitting Profelytes by Baptism into their Religion, highly deserves the serious Consideration of us Christians; for it being acknowledged, by the most learned of our own Writers, that our Saviour took his Pattern from them; so far approving that common Usage of his Nation, as to establish and continue it in the Christian Church, for the solemn way of admitting Profelytes into his reformed Religion. This, by the way, will afford us a solid and convincing Argument, for that ancient Practice of his Church, in admitting the Children of Believers unto Baptism: For since the same Monuments of the Jews, which acquaint us with this way of making Profelytes among them, do likewise assure us that they admitted whole Families, even the tender Infants of aged Profelytes, by the same way of Baptism; and since there is no Exception of Infants in that general Commission, which our Saviour gave his Apostles for the Baptizing all Nations, what can more reasonably be thence inferred, than that he would have them conform to the known Custom of their Nation, by admitting Converts, with their Children, into the

the new Covenant of the Gospel, by that confirmed Rite of Initiation, even as the Jews were wont to admit the Children of Profelytes by the same Ceremony into the Covenant of the Law.

But this only by the way, my business at present being not to vindicate the Baptism of Infants, but to shew the Intent and Meaning of this sacred Institution of Christ, in reference to that Obligation which it lays on all Christians, who by it are made Profelytes to that Religion, which he taught from Heaven. And this can hardly be better done, than by reflecting on what was expected from Profelytes, and what they promised, when by the like Ceremony they were admitted into the Jewish Religion. The Case was plainly this; When a Heathen was convinced of his Errors, and desirous to be admitted to the Worship and Service of the true God of *Israel*, and so *repose himself under the Wings of the Divine MAJESTY*, as they used to speak; he was not only *circumcised* but *baptized* too, promising to *forsake his old Persuasions, Practices and Relations*, and *whatever was contrary to the Holy Religion*, which now he profess'd to undertake. And Baptism now hath the same Signification, only with this difference, that we Christians engage our selves to *worship the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and to *come to him through his Son*, by the *promised Assistance of his Holy Spirit*, and to *embrace the Religion which he hath taught us in his Gospel*; by which we are distinguished from *Jews, Turks*, and all other Nations, who tho' they acknowledge the one true God, do not make their Addresses to him through the only *Mediator Jesus Christ*, nor believe the *Holy Gospel*, which he hath revealed to us. If all this be not yet enough to give you full Satisfaction concerning the Meaning of Christian Baptism; if there be any that can still retain any any Doubt, whether it was instituted on purpose to engage us the more solemnly to lead Christian Lives, or to pursue the great End of our Saviour's coming into the World, by renouncing and for-
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saking our Sins, from which he came to save us.
All will be confirmed by considering,

Fifthly, What was required in the first Times ^{*Fifthly,*} of Persons at Age, when they came to be bapti- ^{*'Tis con-*} zed; for it's manifest by the ancient Forms of ^{*firmed by*} Baptism, that before they were baptized, they pro- ^{*the Practice*} mised to forsake the Devil and all his Works, ^{*of the pri-*} and made an open Profession of Faith in Christ, ^{*mitive*} and of Subjection to his Laws and Government. ^{*Christians.*}
This was performed by way of Question and Answer: First, the Minister propounded certain Questions to the Person to be baptized; which were to this effect, *Doſt thou renounce the Devil, and the Vanities of this wicked World? Doſt thou believe the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith? Art thou reſolved to live ſuitably to the Laws of Chriſt?* To all which, particular Answers were made by the Person to be baptized; by which he expreſſy promiſed to renounce the Devil, and to believe in Chriſt, and to ſerve him in the conſtant Obſervance of the Rules of that Religion, which he had taught in his Holy Goſpel. To theſe Questions and Answers made at Baptiſm, Beza, as well as many others, thinks the Apoſtle to have alluded, when he ſaid, *that baptiſm doth now ſave us, (not the putting away the filth of the fleſh, but the answer of a good conſcience towards God)* 1 Pet. 3. 21. For in Baptiſm (as was intimated before) there was a ſolemn Covenant between God and the baptized Party; wherein God promiſed the Pardon of Sin, the Aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, and an initial Right to celeftial Happineſs, on Condition that he heartily renounce the Devil and his Works, truly believed in Chriſt, and was ſtedfaſtly reſolved to live accordingly. So that, firſt, the Perſon entring into this Covenant by Baptiſm, did ſincerely, and from his Heart, make anſwer to the forementioned Questions, unfeignedly embracing theſe Conditions of the Goſpel Covenant. This might very properly be ſtiled the answer of a good conſcience towards God, which St. Peter ſays *is the baptiſm that now ſaveth us, and not the putting away the filth of the fleſh, by being immersed*
in

in Water, or having it sprinkled on our Faces. The external Washing, only represents that inward Purity of Heart, which Christ requires in his Disciples; and 'tis the true and undissembled Answer of a faithful Soul to God in the Covenant of Baptism, that is the Condition of Salvation: Baptism it self is but the outward Celebration of this Covenant; 'tis the hearty Undertaking the Conditions of it, that will entitle us to the Blessings promised in it. And that there might be no Doubt of this among Christians, those who were baptized in their riper Years, were ever required to make a publick Profession that they did so, before they were admitted into the Church. And tho' in the Baptism of Children, this was done by Sureties, yet was it no less obliging than if it had been done by themselves, or in their own Persons; for if Parents have Power to dispose of their Children, provided it be for their Childrens Good and Benefit, and not to their Prejudice, what should hinder them from dedicating them to God, who hath given us many Instances of his kind Acceptance of Children into Covenant with himself? If a Father, settling an Inheritance on his Child, may oblige him to pay such Debts and Legacies as he shall see fit to charge him with, and the Child be as much obliged to Payment, as if he had engaged in his own Person; can we think that Parents have not an equal Authority over their Children, to oblige them to perform their Duty to God? This I am sure is very reasonable, and so acknowledged by the common Practice of the World in other Cases. And that Children might not be ignorant of their Engagements, or think themselves free from it, Care was taken in the ancient Church, that such as were admitted to Baptism in their Infancy, should be instructed in their Religion, when they came to Years of Discretion; and being instructed, should be brought into the publick Congregation, there in their own Persons publickly to own, confirm, and take upon themselves, what their Representatives had promised in their Name, and

on their Behalf. But, alas! we live in an Age, wherein too many have other Notions of Religion, and vainly flatter themselves with Hopes of getting to Heaven on easier Terms, than those required in our Baptism, and commonly quarrel with us, for making them promise more than they were able to perform; not considering how that Baptismal Promise is to be understood in an evangelical Sense, with all those Allowances of Mercy, which Christ hath purchased for us, and tendreth to us in his Gospel; and that God doth not seek to draw us into Snares, or make us engage to do Impossibilities, but whatever he requires of us in the gracious Covenant of the Gospel as an indispensable Condition of Life, he hath in the same Covenant promised Assistance to enable us to perform it in that degree and measure, which for Christ's sake he will mercifully accept. I shall only add on this Particular, that we shall be unworthy of the Name of Christians, if after all we still think it much to renounce the Devil and all his Works, and to believe in God and serve him: For this is certainly the Meaning of Baptism, as that is an Entrance into the Christian Religion, not only the Practice of the primitive Church, requiring this Profession of such as were admitted to Baptism, but the very Nature of the Christian Religion declares as much. It will not I hope be denied, yea, I doubt not but it will be readily granted, that Christianity requires the renouncing of all Sin and Wickedness, with Faith in Christ, and Obedience to God's Commandments, what then can be more plain, than that this Profession is made by every baptized Person, who takes this Religion on him? It follows, by an unavoidable Consequence, that whosoever renounceth, or disowns this solemn Vow, Promise and Profession made in Baptism; instead of renouncing the Devil and all his Works, renounceth the Christian Religion, and forfeits all his Hopes in Christ, until he return to a better Mind.

And Sixthly, by several Texts of Christian Scripture.

Sixthly, That Christian Baptism was instituted on purpose to engage us the more firmly to lead

Christian Lives, according to the Contents of that Triple Vow, required at our Admission to it, will be farther manifest, by a little Reflection on several Texts of Holy Scripture, which plainly enough declare the same thing. The sixth Chapter to the *Romans*, is very full and clear to this purpose; for it being the Design of the Apostle there, to answer the Objection of those Men, who perverted the Grace of the Gospel, making it an Encouragement to continue in Sin, v. 1. he principally hath recourse to Christian Baptism, and the Profession made of it, as that which would abundantly discover the Vanity of that pernicious Abuse of his foregoing Doctrine, concerning the free Grace of God through the Redemption which is in Jesus Christ. *Know ye not (saith he) that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death, v. 3.* Where, first, the very Phrase of *being baptized into Christ*, signifies being entred by Baptism into the Christian Religion, being admitted into that myltical Body of Christ, and made a Member of that Holy Society, whereof he is the Head, and consequently obliged to observe the Laws, whereby he rules and governs it: For as when, 1 Cor. 10. 2. the Apostle saith, *the Israelites were baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea*, the most probable Meaning is, that they were initiated into his Government, and the Observation of the Laws he should give them; so *to be baptized into Jesus Christ*, is as much as by Baptism to be entred into the Religion which Christ hath taught us, and so engaged in the Observation of those Rules of Life, which it prescribes. But then when it follows, *that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death*, and therefore *that we were buried with him by baptism into death*, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, v. 3, 4. Is not this plainly to tell us, "That Baptism representeth
" to us our Profession, which is to follow the
" Example of Christ, and to be made like unto
" him;

him; that as Christ died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from Sin, and rise again unto Righteousness, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt Affections, and daily proceeding in all Vertue and Godliness of Living? as our Church most truly speaks, upon the Authority of St. Paul, in these and other Texts. For *to be baptized into the death of Christ*, is explained by the Apostle himself, *to be buried with him by Baptism into death*, v. 4. and by *being planted together with him in the likeness of his death*, v. 5. Which can signify no less, than a solemn Profession and Engagement *to crucify the old man*, v. 6. that is, in the Language of our Church, to mortify all evil and corrupt Affections; and in the Phrase of St. Paul, *to die unto sin after the similitude and likeness of the death of Christ*. Which is in effect the very same, as to renounce the Devil and all his Works; even as the other Branch of the Baptismal Profession, which the Apostle calls *walking in newness of life in the likeness of Christs resurrection*, v. 4, 5. is the same with keeping God's holy Will and Commandments, and walking in the same all the Days of our Life. For Sin is the Death of the Soul, a Privation of spiritual Life; and those who are under the Power and Dominion of Sin, are in a State of Death; *i. e.* of spiritual Death in Sin, and liable to all the Misery and Punishment, that is due to such as continue in that accursed State. Therefore our Salvation by Christ is begun, by destroying Sin in us, and raising us to newness of Life: And when our Natures are renewed, and our Lives reformed; when we heartily abdicate, renounce and forsake the forbidden Paths of Sin and Wickedness, and sincerely love and pursue the Ways of true Piety and Goodness, then may we be said to be dead unto Sin, and alive unto God, in conformity *to the death and resurrection of Christ*, Rom. 6. 4. And to this all Christians stand engaged by their Baptism, when they are first solemnly admitted to be the Disciples of Christ: For so many of us as were baptized in-

to Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death; therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, (i. e. into this spiritual Death unto Sin) that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory (or glorious Power) of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, v. 3, 4. i. e. by Baptism we promise and vow a Conformity to the Death and Resurrection of Christ, by dying unto Sin, and leading a new Life of Obedience to the Laws that he hath given us in his Gospel. Accordingly, the Apostle told the Colossians, that they were buried with Christ in baptism, wherein they were also risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead: So that they, who were formerly dead in trespasses and sins, were quickened together with Christ, and raised up together with him, Col. 2. 12, 13. compar'd with Eph. 2. 5, 6. that is, raised from the Death of Sin and Misery, to a Life of Holiness, and Hopes of a glorious Life in Heaven. This is that which St. Paul so earnestly desired, when he said, Phil. 3. 13. *I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.* This spiritual Death to Sin, and correspondent Resurrection to newness of Life, professed in Baptism, in Conformity to the Death and Resurrection of Christ, was more plainly represented by the ancient manner of Baptizing in hotter Countries; for they were immersed all over, and as it were buried in the Water, to signify their Entrance into a State of Mortification, or spiritual Death to Sin, after the Similitude of the Death of Christ; even as the rising out of the Water, likewise signified their spiritual Resurrection to a new and holy Life, after the Similitude of the Resurrection of Christ. And to make all the more significant, the Ancients (excepting Cases of Necessity) baptized only on the last Day of the Week; that is, on the Even of two Lord's Days in the Year, in regard to the time when Christ lay in the Grave, and was about to rise again; in Conformity to whose Death and Resurrection, they by this Rite professed themselves to be spiritually dead, and

to leave their Sins buried in the Water, in order to that new and holy Life represented by their coming forth out of it. Besides this, they put off their old Cloaths, and stripped themselves naked at their going into the Water, to signify the putting off the old man, with his deeds, Col. 3. 9. or putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, as the Apostle speaks, Col. 2. 11. And they were presently clothed with new and white Garments; when they came out of the Water, in token of their having put on Christ, or engaged to imitate and resemble him in Innocence and Purity of Life: From which Custom of putting on white Garments after Baptism, that Day was called *White Sunday*; which was one of the principal Times when the Ancients used to baptize.

The same Baptifimal Profession is plainly enough implied in the Words of St. Paul, Gal. 3. 27. where he says, *as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*. Where to put on Christ, plainly signifies to adorn our selves with those Graces and Vertues, which appeared in him; for to put on the Lord Jesus, is opposed to making provision for the flesh, and fulfilling the lusts thereof, Rom. 13. 14. And therefore must needs signify that holy Change, which the same Apostle elsewhere expresseth by putting off the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, Eph. 4. 22. And putting on the new man, which after God (*i. e.* after the Image of God) is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. 4. 24. compar'd with Col. 3. 10. And thus saith the Apostle, *as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*; that is, they have done it sacramentally at their Baptism; they have done it by the solemn Profession at the least, which they made at their Entrance into Christ's Religion, and Incorporation into his mystical Body the Church: For that is the Meaning of being baptized into Christ, as was shewn before. And now I hope I need not tell you, that the putting on of Christ, in the Sense intended by the Apostle, is full as much as forsaking the Devil and all his Works, and

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engaging to keep God's holy Will, &c. So that this Baptifmal Engagement is fufficiently juftified by thofe Words of St. Paul, which exprefly tell us, that *as many as have been baptized into Chrift, have put on Chrift*; for what lefs can be meant thereby, than that by their Baptifm they have fo-lemnly engaged fo to do.

And Se-
venthly,
from the
Effects a-
fcribed to
it in the
Gofpel.

Seventhly, That this is the Meaning of Chriftian Baptifm, may alfo be collected from the Effects afcribed to it in the Gofpel. We profefs in one of our Creeds to acknowledge *one Baptifm for the Remiffion of Sins*; and it was generally the Belief of the ancient Chriftians, that all Sins were re-mitted in Baptifm, infomuch that it bore that Name. For Baptifm was by *Tertullian* called *remiffa peccatorum*, that was his Word: And this is very agreeable to the plain and undoubted Do-ctrine of the Scripture; for not only *John* is faid to have preached *the Baptifm of repentance for the remiffion of fins*, Mark 1. 4. but St. *Peter* ad-vised the Jews to *repent, and be baptized for the remiffion of their fins*; i. e. to make a publick Profeflion of their Repentance by Baptifm, in or-der to Pardon; when they were *pricked in their hearts* by the Senfe of their Sins, and demanded of St. *Peter* and the reft of the Apoftles, what they fhould do to remove their guilt, Acts 2. 37, 38. If Baptifm were not an Obligation of Pardon, on Condition of Repentance, to what purpofe was that Advice? But the Words of *Ananias* unto *Saul*, are very plain, Acts 22. 16. *arife, faith he, and be baptized, and wafh away thy fins*. Nor need we wonder at the Phrafe, or think it much that Baptifm fhould be faid to wafh away the Guilt of Sin, if we confider that the Sacraments of the Gofpel are not empty and deceitful Signs, but powerful Means and Instruments of Grace, when the Perfon is duly qualified for the Reception of them, God always bleffing his own Inftitutions, and making them effectual to the Ends for which he appointed them. Befides, it is always to be remembred, that when the Bleffing of Pardon is afcribed to Baptifm, 'tis by Vertue of the Cove-
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nant between God and us, which is then solemnized in God's appointed way; the general and conditional Covenant of Grace, which was indefinitely confirmed by the Blood of Christ, is sealed in Baptism to the particular Person who receives it. In this Baptismal Covenant, we promise Faith and Obedience unto God; and God assures us, that as certainly as our Bodies are washed with Water, so certainly will he cleanse us from the Guilt of all our Sins, and enable us to mortify and subdue them too, yea, and at last make us eternally Happy in Heaven, if we perform our Undertaking, and continue steadfast in our Covenant with him. As he requires us to forsake the Devil and all his Works, to believe in Christ and serve him; so by Baptism he receives us into his Church, and admits us to be numbred with his People, who are in a peculiar State of Favour and Pardon; for by Baptism he admits us into the Covenant of Grace, purchased for us by the Merits of Christ. In which gracious Covenant he hath promised to accept of Repentance, instead of perfect Purity and spotless Innocence; so that we shall not perish for *Adam's Sin*, nor for our own neither, if we heartily renounce and forsake them: So the Baptism, wherein this Covenant is solemnized and sealed, is as evidently an Instrument of Pardon, as that Pardon is a Blessing promised in the Covenant, solemnized and sealed by it. But then we must not forget, how the Pardon assured to us in Baptism, depends on our sincere Performance of the Condition therein undertaken by us; for 'tis not the outward Washing, or mere *putting away the filth of the flesh*, as *St. Peter* speaks, but *the answer of a good conscience unto God*, according to our Baptismal Covenant, will save us: Which, as it shews the Promise and Engagement made in Baptism to be the great *Intention* and Meaning of this Sacrament, so it will help us to understand the Meaning of that known Sanction of the Gospel Condition, *Mark 16. 16. he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: i. e. he that is steadfastly persuaded*

of the Truth of the Holy Gospel, and by Baptism makes a publick Profession of his Faith, and Resolution to live accordingly; he that truly believeth the Gospel, and by Vertue of that his Faith heartily resigneth up himself unto God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost, in the Baptismal Covenant, and continues to live according to this Profession, he shall be accepted of God, and finally obtain the Salvation of his Soul, and at the Resurrection of the Dead be raised incorruptible, and be made eternally Happy. To conclude this Particular, these Conditions of our Baptismal Covenant, are the Terms on which we were admitted to be Christians; and upon the sincere Performance of them, in an evangelical Sense, depend all our Hopes of Acceptance with God, and eternal Happiness in Heaven: For it's unreasonable to expect Admission into Heaven, on easier Terms, than we were admitted to be Christians; or that our Pretences to Christianity will secure us at the last, if we violate that Holy Profession, by living in Contradiction to it.

Secondly, *Secondly,* As for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, that likewise hath a manifest Tendency to save us from our Sins themselves, by turning us *qualify us* from them. This will be very plain, if you consider that in it we renew our Baptismal Covenant; we make a solemn Profession of our selves to be Christ's Disciples; we own and take him for our Master, and engage our selves afresh in his Service; we receive him that is represented to us by the Signs of Bread and Wine, and withal give up our selves unto him; we seal too those Truths, that he hath sealed with his Blood; we profess our Faith in our crucified Saviour, that we firmly assent to the Doctrine of his Holy Gospel, and heartily consent and resolve to live according to it, and obey it. So that this Sacrament calls loudly for a regular Life, a State of Holiness, and habitual and constant Course of Obedience; or at least a sincere Repentance, a stedfast Purpose, and firm Resolution to forsake the Paths of Sin, and to persevere in the Ways of

The Lord's Supper, to save us from our Sins themselves, by turning us qualify us from them. This will be very plain, if you consider that in it we renew our Baptismal Covenant; we make a solemn Profession of our selves to be Christ's Disciples; we own and take him for our Master, and engage our selves afresh in his Service; we receive him that is represented to us by the Signs of Bread and Wine, and withal give up our selves unto him; we seal too those Truths, that he hath sealed with his Blood; we profess our Faith in our crucified Saviour, that we firmly assent to the Doctrine of his Holy Gospel, and heartily consent and resolve to live according to it, and obey it. So that this Sacrament calls loudly for a regular Life, a State of Holiness, and habitual and constant Course of Obedience; or at least a sincere Repentance, a stedfast Purpose, and firm Resolution to forsake the Paths of Sin, and to persevere in the Ways of

of God's Commandments: So that all that think of being Partakers of it, have just reason to examine their Lives, to search and ransack every Corner of their Hearts, labouring to extirpate the Habits of Sin, and bring their Hearts to a Willingness to abandon every forbidden Course, and to possess them with a Resolution to live answerable to this Profession. In it therefore we profess Obedience to the Gospel; and doing so, we ought strictly to examine, whether those Graces are sound and sincere in our Hearts, which the Gospel especially requires; the Sum whereof are Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. These two, *Faith* and *Repentance*, are the grand Precepts of the Gospel, the fundamental Laws of Jesus Christ, which both he and his Apostles, those Heralds of his Grace, especially proclaimed throughout the World, and enjoined on all that would be his Disciples; they are the Spring and Fountain, out of which all other Duties arise; the main Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, without which we can lay no Claim to the Benefits promised therein, and therefore require our special and most serious Consideration.

First, Then consider, whether your Faith be such *First*, as God requires; such, as purifieth the Heart, as *Faith*. worketh by Love, as is productive of good Works: For as the Tree is better known by the Fruit which it bears, than by the Root on which it grows, so Faith is better known by the Effects which it produces, than in the Principle from which they flow. Every one will say he believeth, but he doth no more than say so, unless he can shew the Fruits of Faith: For as he that saith he knoweth God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar; so he that saith he believeth God, and keepeth not his Commandments, is no true Believer. True Faith is a lively operative and working Principle, from which its two Companions, Hope and Charity, as also good Works and Obedience, do flow as its proper and genuine Emanations: It is the Shield that repelleth Temptations; the Victo-

ry that overcometh the World, that subdueth Lusts, that conquereth Sin, and brings us in subjection to the Scepter, and makes us obedient to the Laws of Jesus Christ. We believe his Promises, and therefore live in Hope and Expectation of them: We believe his Threats, and therefore fear them: We believe his Commands, and therefore obey them: We believe that he hateth, that he hath forbidden, and that he will punish Sin, and therefore we forsake it; and we believe that he loveth, that he hath commanded, and that he will reward our Charity, good Works and Obedience, and therefore we perform them. For otherwise Faith is dead, and will neither fit us for the Communion here, nor for Heaven hereafter. Again, consider Faith as terminated on Christ, and yet it will produce the like Effects; we believe that he is a Prophet, and therefore come unto him to be taught; that he is our Lord, and therefore submit unto him to be ruled; that he is our Saviour, and therefore cast our selves into the Arms of his Mercy, and rely on him alone for our Salvation. These are the Fruits and surest Indications and Consequents of a lively Faith, which contains not only a mere Assent unto the Truth, but also a hearty Consent unto the Goodness of the Divine Revelations; not only a Persuasion that all is true, that the Gospel hath said, but an Embrace of its Invitation, and Acceptance of all that is tendred, upon the Terms on which it is offered, by yielding up our selves to the Lord Jesus, to obey him in all things.

Secondly,
Repentance.

Secondly, Consider your Repentance, whether it be sound and sincere; whether your Hearts are truly affected with a godly Sorrow, and Contrition for Sin, out of a Sense of its Odiousness and filthy Nature, and by reason of the Love of God working in your Hearts; and not only for fear of Punishment, or out of temporal Regards; Whether your Affections are weaned from the Love, and your Lives divorced from the Practice of Sin; *i. e.* in the Words of the Prophet, whether ye have ceased to do Evil, and learned to do

do Well. For Repentance is not only a sorrow for Sin, a wishing we had not done it, but *Metanoia* a change of Mind, a forsaking of Sin, a turning unto God, and State of new Obedience. Consider therefore, and examine it in all its Parts, supply its Defects, repair its Decays, and correct your former Negligence; purge your Souls by humble Confession, by godly Sorrow, and hearty Contrition; by a sincere Detestation and Hatred of Sin; and wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings, that ye may be a meet Society for the Holy Jesus; who, partly out of Compassion to our Failings, instituted this Sacrament, that we, having broke our first Engagements, might renew our Vows, strengthen and confirm our Purposes, fortify and encrease our Resolutions to abandon Sin, the World, Flesh and Devil, and obey the Lord Jesus in all things.

To this purpose we ought to call forth our most serious Thoughts, and meditate on the Ends for which this Ceremony was ordained, and study its mysterious Significations: Enquire what this Bread and Wine doth signify, and what our Eating of the Bread, and Drinking of the Cup doth import. To this end I shall a little draw the Veil, and make way to look into this sacred Mystery; the right Understanding whereof, is proper and useful to enforce the Practice of all that I have hitherto been persuading you to do. The Sum whereof was this; To examine our Lives, and repent and reform what we find amiss, either towards God or Man: And this we solemnly engage our selves to do, in receiving this Sacrament; wherein we make a Covenant of Obedience unto God, and a League of Friendship and Charity with Men.

First, We make, or rather renew, our Covenant of Obedience unto God; we engage Fidelity and vow Allegiance to the Captain of our Salvation Jesus Christ. This will appear to any that shall well consider the Words in the Institution, *Mat. 26. 28.* This is my Blood *his valuable shedding of the God,* *New Testament, or Covenant:* and *Luke 22. 20.* this

To this End consider, that we hereby

First, Renew our Covenant of Obedience unto

Cup is the new Covenant in my Blood. 'Tis called a Covenant in the same Sense as Circumcision, Gen. 17. 10. because it was a sign and seal of the Covenant of Grace, Rom. 4. 11. Now every Covenant implies a mutual Engagement, and the Seal obligeth both Parties to the Performance of all that they are respectively bound unto : So that as God hath engaged himself to give us all the Benefits, that in his Gospel he hath offered, so we stand engaged to perform all the Duties that in the same are required ; and as God, in giving the Bread and Wine, sets to his Seal that he will perform his Promises of Grace, Pardon and eternal Life, so we by receiving them, put to our Seal to perform the Conditions of Faith and Repentance, and that which will necessarily follow from these two, hearty and sincere Obedience. This is one great Secret that lies hidden in this mysterious Action ; God seals his Covenant of Grace in giving, and we seal our Covenant of Obedience in receiving the Bread and Wine : He gives his Son to us, whose Body and Blood is represented by those Signs ; and we give our selves to him, by receiving of them, or at least profess and engage so to do, as is evident, under what Notion soever we consider this Sacrament.

Consider it merely as a Sign of the Covenant ; yet then it signifies that we engage our selves unto God, that as he hath confirmed his Promises by an Oath, so we also *Sacramento nos obstringimus*, as was said of the ancient Christians, bind our Promises also by an Oath, or (as we say) take the Sacrament upon it, that we will be Christ's faithful Servants and Soldiers unto our Lives end ; the receiving of the Signs signifies as much, it denotes our Engagement in Covenant with him, in that we receive the Signs thereof.

Again, look on this Action as a Symbol, and Sign of our believing in Christ ; yet even then it signifies that we own him for our Master, and solemnly profess our selves to be his Servants and Disciples.

Look upon it as a Remembrance of Christ, as
indeed

indeed it is to be done in remembrance of him, Luke 22. 19. yet this remembring of him, is to keep us from forgetting our Engagement to him. The visible Signs that were ordained to be taken in Remembrance that Christ died for us, are also a Memorial of our Engagement to live unto him; one End of his Death, which we commemorate, being to redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify us to himself a peculiar, &c.

Look upon it as the shewing forth the Death of Christ, which the Apostle tells us we do, when we eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, 1 Cor. 11. 26. yet still this very Annunciation, or shewing forth his Death, is a professing of our Faith in him, a proclaiming unto God and the World, that we are the Disciples and Servants of this crucified Saviour, that we acknowledge and own him for our Lord.

Again, look upon it as a Feast of Joy and Thanksgiving; which is indeed so great a part of the Solemnity, that it hath given the Name to the Whole, it being by the Ancients frequently called the *Eucharist*, or Thanksgiving: Yet this Thanksgiving is not so much the Work of the Lips, as of the Heart and Life; 'Tis a shewing forth his Praise, not only with our Mouths, but in our Lives, by giving up our selves to his Service, and by walking before him in Holiness and Righteousness all our Days, as our Church hath it in her *General Thanksgiving*.

Consider it again as a commemorative Sacrifice, or Representation of the great Sacrifice of Christ; yet still 'tis a Confederation and Engagement of our selves to God. The Eating of the sacrificial Feasts, or, as the Apostle calls it, the *partaking of the altar*, 1 Cor. 10. 18. was amongst both Jews and Gentiles a solemn Rite, whereby they addicted themselves to the Worship of both the true and false Gods. Hence it was, that Daniel refused to eat of the portion of the king's meat, Dan. 1. 8. And hence it was, that both Jews and Christians did so religiously abstain from all idolatrous Sacrifices; because the Eating and Drink-

Drinking any part of them, was intended as a Rite of Covenanting with that Idol to which the Sacrifice was offered, an Act of religious Worship, and an Acknowledgment of it for their God. And that this was the way of the *Israelites* Covenanting with the true God, may appear from *Exodus* 24. after *Moses* had rehearsed to the people the laws which he had received in the mount, the People answered, *all the words which the Lord hath said, we will do*, v. 3. To make this Covenant more firm, they sacrificed unto God, and *Moses* took the Blood of the Sacrifice, and sprinkled it on the People, and said, *behold the Blood of the Covenant, which the Lord hath made with you*, v. 8. But for the completing of this Covenant, the Chief of the People drew nearer unto God, and did eat and drink, v. 11. Whereby sure must be meant, of their Feasting on part of the Sacrifice as a Rite, whereby they confirmed their former Covenant, and Promise. *All that the Lord hath said will we do*. To which Custom the Apostle clearly alludes, *I Cor.* 10. 16. when he calls the cup of blessing which we bless, and the bread which we break *now* *not* *only* *a* *Communion*, or participation of the body and blood of Christ. 'Tis as if he had said, as the *Israelites* by eating of the Sacrifices, were Partakers of the Altar; and by partaking of it, solemnly profess'd themselves to be the Worshipers of that God, to whom the Altar was erected, and Sacrifice offered; and by this Rite joined themselves in Covenant unto him: So we Christians, by partaking of this Bread and Wine, profess our selves to be the Servants, and by this Rite consecrate our selves to the Worship of Christ, engaging to be faithful in that Covenant that is between us.

Yea, if we consider this Sacrament only as a religious Ceremony, or holy Rite, instituted of God as an Act of his Worship; yet still the very using of it is an Acknowledgment of him for our God; The performing but of one Rite, which God hath appointed as a Ceremony in our Christian Religion, obliges us to observe the whole Religion, which he that appointed the Ceremony doth com-

mand

mand; just as he that was circumcised, was made a Debtor to the whole Law. So that under what Notion soever this Sacrament be considered, it implies an Engagement of our selves by way of Covenant unto God, and not only so, but also,

Secondly, A League of Friendship and Charity Secondly, with Men; for, besides, that this is contained in *That we* our Engagement unto God, who hath so often and *make a* so strictly commanded Love and Charity towards *League of* our Brethren, there are many things particularly *Friendship* considerable in this Sacrament, that directly look *and Charity* that way, and make it plainly appear, that one *with Men.* End thereof was to advance Love, and increase Charity one towards another.

Consider it but as a common Feast, or our Eating and Drinking together, 'tis a sign of Love, and mutual Friendship amongst all the Company; yea, the Word Company is derived from *Companis*, or this Custom of eating Bread together, as a means to maintain mutual Love, and friendly Correspondence.

Consider it again as a Feast of Love, as it was instituted of Christ, in imitation of the Jews *post cœnium*, or Custom after Supper, in distributing of Bread and Wine about the Table, as an Argument of Charity, and brotherly Kindness amongst them, and it will appear that it was intended, that it should be a Token and Confession of Charity among Christians.

Consider it again as a federal Rite, or sacrificial Feast, such as was the Passover, which this succeeded, and it denotes a Confederation of all Christians, not only with God, but also with one another, by Eating of the same Bread, and Drinking of the same Cup.

Consider it again as a Remembrance of the Death and Love of Christ, it will teach us the same Duty, that he himself commanded when he was on Earth; namely, *to love one another, as he hath loved us*; to recompence this Love of his in dying for us, by loving of his Members, whom he most dearly tenders, and takes what is done unto them, as done unto himself.

Consider

Consider it again as a sign of our Faith in Christ, yet thus it signifies, that we are all the Disciples of the same Master, and *therefore should love and be kindly affected one towards another.*

Consider it again as a means of our nearer Union with Christ, and doubtless that which unites us to the Head, should also unite us to all his Members, by most strong and indissoluble Bands of Love.

Lastly, consider it as an Eucharist, or Thanksgiving unto God in general for all his Benefits, and in particular for the Death of his Son; it supposes some Expressions of our Thankfulness, not only in Thoughts and Words, but also in Deeds, by giving something unto him for the Relief of our Brethren that are in Want, in Imitation of the great Love and Liberality of the primitive Christians, who always took Care to feed the Poor; when God fed them at his holy Table, they had their *ἀγάπαι*, or Feasts of Charity at a common Table, and constant Collections for those that were in Want, according to the Apostle's Ordinance, 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. Thus I have made it plainly appear, that we do in this Sacrament make a League of Friendship and Charity with Men, as well as to renew our Covenant of Obedience unto God: So that we can no longer doubt, but that this Sacrament also was instituted to redeem or turn us from our Sins.

The Design of our Saviour's coming into the World, was manifestly declared by the Angel, who called him *Jesus*, because he came to save us from our sins; i. e. from our Sins themselves, and all the Evils and Miseries that they had brought upon us, or made us hereafter obnoxious unto. *First*, From our Sins themselves, in the plain and literal Sense; that is, from the Dominion and Practice of them, and so to work a Reformation in the World. Not only his Incarnation, but his most holy Doctrine, and his Miracles too by which it was confirmed; the Example of his Life, and Sacrifice of his Death; his Resurrection from the Grave; his Ascension into Heaven, and powerful Intercession for us

there at the right Hand of God ; the sending of the Holy Ghost, and Institution of the Sacraments of the Gospel, have all and each of them a Tendency to promote this first and great Part of our Salvation, which consisteth in saving or converting us from the Practice of our Sins. To which I may add, his establishing a lasting Ministry in his Church; his granting the Power of Binding and Loosing to the Governours of it; and, lastly, the Assurance that he hath given us of eternal Judgment, and the endless Rewards and Punishments that are to follow: For who is there that doth not clearly see, how mightily these do tend to promote the same Design; but having been somewhat large in the *Nine first Particulars*, I shall be briefer in these that yet remain. To proceed, therefore, in the

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Tenth place, to the standing Ministry established by our Saviour, and to shew, that the Design of it was to dissuade and take Men off from their Sins, and so to work a Reformation in the World. A few Words may suffice; for in the general Commission, which our Saviour gave his Apostles when he sent them to teach or make Disciples of all Nations, he expressly gave it in their Charge, that they should teach them to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them, Mat. 28. 20. And when Paul in particular was sent unto the Gentiles, his great Business was to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sin, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified; as he was told in a heavenly Vision, Acts 20. 18. In obedience whereunto, he went about and preached, that men should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance, v. 20. This was the first part of the Apostolical Office, viz. by preaching the Gospel, to call Men to the Faith of Christ; and by that to persuade them to turn from their Sins to God: And being converted, another part of it was to build them up in their most holy Faith, or to confirm, strengthen, and encourage them to proceed

The Design of establishing a standing Ministry, was to take Men off from their Sins.

proceed in the Ways of Righteousness; for so we are told, that when our Saviour ascended up on high, and led captivity captive; that is, at his glorious Ascension into Heaven, when he triumphed over the Powers of Darknes, he gave some Apostles, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers; for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying the body of Christ: i. e. to build up the Church in Faith and Holiness, and so still more and more to perfect that mystical Body, whereof Christ is the Head, Eph. 4. 11, 12. But the Case is so plain, that I need not insist on this; I only mention it as another signal Evidence of his great Care to save us from the Practice of our sins. For besides all other Methods, to this purpose he hath set apart a distinct Order of Men, and made them his Embassadors, to beseech Men in his stead to be reconciled unto God; that is, to lay aside their Enmity, and submit to the Terms of Reconciliation and Peace, propounded in the Gospel, 2 Cor. 5. 20. And to make the Word of Reconciliation, committed to them, the more regarded, our Saviour hath, in the

For the
same End
Christ has
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of his
Church, the
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Eleventh place, given to the Governours of his Church the Power of Binding and Loosing, assuring us moreover, that whatsoever they bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever they loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. For that this Power was not given to Peter alone, (tho' first promised to him by Name upon his Confession of Christ, Mat. 16. 18, 19.) is evident from ch. 18. 18. where the same Power is granted to all the Apostles, and in them to all the Governours of the Church. Now 'tis generally granted, that this Power of Binding and Loosing, contains in it a Power of determining what Persons are fit to be received into the Church, and who are fit to be cast out; and that this Power ought to be put in execution too, according to the ancient Practice of the Church from the Apostles Days, when no Persons of Age were admitted into the Church of Christ, without a publick Profession of the Christian Faith, and a Promise of a suitable Life:

Life : And such as afterwards basely violated that Profession by scandalous and notorious Sins, were cast out of its Communion, and not allowed the Priviledges of Christians, until they had given sufficient Evidence of their Repentance. Which Power, granted by Christ unto the Governours of his Church, and exercised by his Apostles and Successors after them, farther yet demonstrates, how mindful he was of saving his People from their Sins; that is, from a sinful and vicious Life : For besides the strict Engagement required at Admission into his Church, he established an holy Discipline for the turning notorious Offenders out of the Communion of it. By this it plainly appears, that his Design was not to gather to himself a great number of Followers, not differing in their Lives from other Men, *but to purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

Twelfthly and *lastly*, The Assurance that our Saviour hath given us of eternal Judgment after Death, and of everlasting Rewards and Punishments that are to follow it in the Life to come, is of all the most uncontrollable Evidence of this holy Design of his coming to reform and amend the World : For these are the great Principles of all Religion, and the most effectual Motives to an holy Life. The Belief of them is absolutely necessary to restrain Men from Vice, and engage them in the hearty Practice of true Vertue and Goodness, whilst they live in these Tabernacles of sinful Flesh, amidst the manifold Temptations of an enchanting World. And tho' it be highly reasonable, upon many Accounts, more particularly upon Consideration of the present Disposition of Providence, which gives us just Reason to believe that the time of Retribution or exact Dispensation of Rewards and Punishments, is reserved for the other World, because the Wicked go unpunished, and the Righteous often suffer here; as also from the present Workings of Conscience within us, for its approving or acquitting, as well as its accusing and condemning of us, is a most evident Testimony that God, will bring

And Last-ly, has appointed future Rewards and Punishments.

us to Judgment: Tho' it be highly reasonable, on these, and many other Accounts, that all Men should be accountable to the Great Creator and Sovereign Lord of the whole World, and consequently be brought before his just and righteous Tribunal, to have their Actions impartially scanned, and their Persons accordingly doomed to a suitable Reward or Punishment, insomuch that all Nations have ever embraced the general Substance of these Truths; yet our Saviour, who brought *Life and Immortality more clearly to light by his Gospel*, hath more plainly revealed, more convincingly asserted, and more clearly described them to us Christians. So that we cannot reasonably doubt of his Design to reform the World, by reclaiming them from their Sins, since he hath fully assured that he will call us all to Judgment, that *every one may receive (the Reward of) the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. That is, the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal, Mat. 25. 46. Had not the Angel told us that the Holy Jesus came to save us from our Sins, should all my former Arguments, however valid and convincing in themselves, prove unsatisfactory to any Person, this alone (methinks) should abundantly satisfy him, and put him out of doubt concerning the Truth of my present Doctrine. For by this it is apparent, that notwithstanding the great Love and Kindness of God towards Man; notwithstanding the wonderful Love which was manifested towards us, in sending his Son to be a propitiation for our sins, 1 John 4. 9, 10. yet such was his Love to Righteousness, and Hatred of Iniquity; such was his Care to uphold his own most excellent Government, and secure Obedience to his most holy and necessary Laws, that he was so far from countenancing Sin and Wickedness, or promising Security to any that continue in it, that he hath abundantly assured us, that *he hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man, whom he hath ordained*, Acts 17. 31. That

That is, by our Lord Jesus Christ; for so the Apostles are commanded to preach unto the People, and to testify that it is HE, *which was ordained of God to judge the quick and dead*, Acts 10. 42. And we are as plainly told, that when the day of Retribution is come, *he will render to every man according to his deeds*, Rom. 2. 6. He dealeth plainly with us, and tells us now, what we are to expect hereafter, according to our behaviour under his spiritual Government. He concealeth nothing that may tend to our Emendation, but lays open the Counsels of Eternity, and lets us know in this World, how he will deal with both the Righteous and Wicked in the other; to them, *who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour and immortality*, he will render *eternal Life*; but to them, *who are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul that doth evil*, v. 7, 8, 9, 10. More particularly our Saviour hath assured us by the Gospel,

First, Of the Certainty of future Judgment; it being appointed by an unchangeable Decree of God, like that of returning to the Dust; Heb. 9. 27. *it is appointed to men once to die, but after this the judgment.* So that Death and Judgment are both appointed by the determinate Counsel of God, and Judgment must follow Death, as certainly as Death shall end this frail and mortal Life; and greater Certainty there cannot be, than the determinate Purpose and Appointment of Almighty God. Of the two, Judgment is the surer, even surer than Death it self; for as Angels shall be judged, which cannot die, so those Men shall be judged, who shall *be found alive at the end of the world*, 1 Cor. 15. 51. We shall not all sleep, saith the Apostle; that is, *shall not all die*; which is spoken of those that shall be found alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, 1 Thess. 4. 15. But we shall all be judged, both they that are in their graves, and those that shall then be found alive at this coming of the Lord; for as Christ is Lord both of the dead and living, Rom. 14. 9. so he shall judge both quick and dead at his appearing. 2 Tim. 4. 1. Where by *Quick* we are to understand
all

all that shall be found alive at his Second Coming ; and by *Dead*, all whose Bodies have been laid in the Grave, or elsewhere, from the beginning of the World.

Secondly, In order to this Judgment, the Gospel farther assures us of a *general Resurrection of the dead*, both of the *just and unjust*, Acts 24. 15. *The hour is coming*, saith our Saviour, *in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation*, John 5. 28, 29. Which shews us,

Thirdly, That this Judgment shall be universal ; so that all shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and every one of us give an account of himself to God, Rom. 14. 10, 12. And Mat. 25. 31, 32. *when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him ; then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left, in order to their ensuing Sentence.* So that no Nation or Person shall escape Appearance at that universal Trial ; for we *must* all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one *may* receive the things done in his body, (that is, the Reward of his former Actions) of what kind soever they were.

Fourthly, The Gospel assures us also, that there shall be a strict Enquiry into the former Lives and Actions of Men, yea, and into the very Thoughts and Intentions of their Hearts, so that nothing shall escape, which shall not be disclosed, and brought to light in that universal Scrutiny ; for when our Lord shall come, he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, 1 Cor. 4. 5. *Therefore the day of judgment is called the Day, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to the gospel*, Rom. 2. 16.

Fifthly, We are assured likewise, that the Proceedings of that Day shall be just and impartial, that every Case and Circumstance shall be considered, and the Merits of every Cause weighed in an equal Ballance ; for the Judge of all the earth will judge the world.

world in righteousness, Acts 17. 31. And therefore that Day of Wrath, is called the Day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. 2. 5. And the Righteousness and Impartiality of it will appear, in that he will render to every man according to his works, v. 6. Then the good and faithful servant shall enter into the joy of his Lord, and the evil and unprofitable shall be cast into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; for the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works, Mat. 16. 27. Then will he separate the good from the bad, and say unto them on his right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared, &c. Mat. 25. 34. but to them on the left, depart from me ye cursed, &c. v. 41. so that these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal, v. 46. Certainly he that assureth us of these things; he that hath so plainly told us, that our everlasting State of Happiness or Misery in the World to come, depends on our Behaviour in this present Life; he, who hath so fully and clearly revealed to us the Certainty of Judgment to come, and the everlasting Rewards and Punishments which are to follow, according to Mens good or evil Deeds in this present State of Trial, could be no Friend to Sin and Wickedness, nor give any Encouragement to continue in them: For it's manifest that his Design was, by the most powerful Motives and clearest Convictions, to engage us in the most diligent pursuit of Vertue and Goodness, and the Abhorrence of whatsoever is evil and offensive unto God.

I have now done with the Doctrine I have been so long upon, having by a great Variety of plain and convincing Arguments made it manifest, that our Saviour came to save us from the Dominion, Practice and Slavery of our Sins, and so to work a Reformation in the World, by bringing us to true Christian Liberty. I have gone over most of the Articles of our Christian Faith, and shewn how all of them tend to the promoting of this holy Design. If any think me tedious, or impertinent for insisting so long on so plain a Truth, let him consider the Lives of Men, or the Doctrines that pass for current
amongst

amongst many of them; and I am mistaken if he also will not see Cause to fear, that either they do not believe, or else do not duly consider, that the *Reformation of the World, or our Deliverance from the Dominion of Sin*, was part of our Saviour's Office, and the Design of his Manifestation in Human Flesh; for tho' we are as plainly told as Words can express, that *Christianity is a mystery of godliness*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. and that *for this purpose the Son of God was manifest, that he might destroy the works of the devil*, 1 John 3. 8. tho' all that he hath done and suffered for us apparently tends to the Advancement of this holy Design, as hath been somewhat largely shewn in the foregoing Discourses, yet the unsuitable Lives of multitudes, who call themselves Christians, are too plain an evidence, that this great Truth hath not yet found its due Entertainment in their Hearts, for otherwise they would not live so contrary to it as they commonly do; for with what Face or Confidence can any considering Man glory in the Name of Christ, and expect Salvation from him, and at the same time live in Contradiction to the End and Purpose of his coming? However, the Usefulness of this Doctrine, which I have been so long establishing, will sufficiently justify and excuse the length of all that hath passed in Confirmation of it; for that which was the Design of our Saviour's coming, was certainly the Design of his Father's sending him into the World. Since, therefore, he came not to save us in our Sins, or secure us in the Practice of them, but to save and convert us from them, that being free from the Law of Sin, *we might serve God in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life*, Luke 1. 74, 75. we may be sure that this was likewise designed in the gracious Counsels of God, concerning our Redemption; and that he sent his Holy Son, not only to be a Propitiation for our Sins, but a Preacher of Righteousness, and Example of a godly Life; yea, and a Law-giver, to deliver the most excellent Rules of Manners, and establish them by Divine Authority, for the Reformation of the sinful World, that having reclaimed us from Sin and Wickedness, the Cause of all our Misery, we may be his Free-men here; that is, free from wilful and deliberate Sins. In which Freedom the nature of Christian Liberty consists, which will qualify us for Salvation from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, and so make us eternally Happy in the *Heavenly Jerusalem*; into which, *there shall not enter any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination*, Rev. 21. 27.

5 DECO
F I N I S.

Christian Liberty.

Christian Liberty, or Freedom, is a Priviledge oftner talk'd of, than rightly understood; for through a mistake of this, the Church of Christ hath been strangely disturb'd both in former and later Days, there being no kind of Wickedness which the Lusts of Men have inclin'd them to, which hath not been pleaded for by some or other under the pretence of Christian Liberty: For the better understanding therefore of the Priviledge itself, I shall endeavour to shew,

1st. Wherein Christian Freedom or Liberty doth not consist. And

2dly, Wherein it doth.

I. For the better understanding of the true nature of Christian Freedom, it will be very useful to shew in what sorts of Freedom it neither doth, nor can consist; for these clouds of Error and Mistakes being once dispersed, the light of the Truth must needs the more clearly appear, even of *that Truth*, which will make us free according to our Saviour's Promise, *John 8. 32.* And this I shall the rather do, because this Freedom or Liberty whereof our Saviour speaks, is the undoubted Priviledge of all true Christians in the World, as being the blessed effect and fruit of our Redemption by the Blood of Christ. 'Tis the summ and substance of the great Jubile concerning spiritual and eternal Liberty and Redemption, shadowed in the Law, and foretold by the Prophets before the coming of Christ, the *good tidings of great joy unto all People*, published by the Angel at his Nativity,

tivity, *Luke 2. 10.* and preached by our Saviour himself in the *Synagogue at Nazareth*, *Luke 4. 18.* In a word 'tis a great benefit and blessing of the Gospel, constantly proclaimed in it, yea, wrought and effected by it; for which Reasons the Gospel it self is stiled *a Law of Liberty*, *James 2. 12. 1 Ch. 25.* But because there are several sorts of Liberty talk'd of in the World, one of which is more properly called Licentiousness, which is indeed the vilest Bondage, and others which have no countenance at all, but much opposition from the Gospel, let us endeavour to separate the Gold from the Dross, the Pure from the Vile, that we may the more clearly see what this Freedom is, which Christ hath promised, and for which his Gospel is stiled *a Law of Liberty*.

In a freedom from subjection to Lawful Governors.

I. 'Tis evident that the Gospel doth not free us from Subjection and Obedience to Lawful Governors, whom God hath placed in Authority over us; much less doth it free us from Obedience to God himself, or from the obligation of his Moral and Eternal Law, or from all manner of Punishment for our Sins against it, or from the Necessity of Repentance or Conversion from Sin to Holiness, as the Condition of Life and Happiness, and so cannot be stiled a *Law of Liberty* in any of these respects; for this is not the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us Free.

1st. I say the Gospel doth not free us from Subjection and Obedience to Lawful Governors, or any Superiors whom God hath placed in Authority over us, and so it cannot in that respect be called a *Law of Liberty*; for 'tis as manifest from the Gospel as words can possibly make it, That God hath ordained several Orders and Degrees of Men, whereof some are to be in Power and Authority, others under Subjection and Obedience. How plainly are *Children commanded to obey their Parents*, *Ephes. 6. 1.* *Servants to obey their Masters*, *Col. 3. 20, 22.* And all Christians *to be subject to the higher Powers, and to submit themselves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, and for Conscience sake*, *Rom. 13. 1.* *1 Pet. 2. 13?* As also *to obey such as rule over them* (in

(in the Church) and to *submit themselves unto them*, because *they watch for their souls*, Heb. 13. 17? Which Christian Precepts make it apparent that the Gospel doth not countenance Anarchy and Confusion, by exempting the Professors of it from Subjection and Obedience either to Civil or Ecclesiastical Governors, 1 Pet. 2. 16, 17.

2dly, The Gospel, tho' a Law of Liberty, gives no toleration to Licentiousness and Impiety: Some Hereticks indeed there were of old, even in the Apostles days (and I wish there were none in ours) who turned the Grace of God into wantonness, extending Christian Liberty so far as to free them from all Divine and Humane Laws, not only to exempt Servants from Obedience to their Masters, and Subjects from all Duty to their Princes, but moreover to exclude all necessity of Obedience unto God, despising Sin as nothing but the fancy and opinion of Men, and flattering themselves with a conceit, That the free use of the Creatures (as they love to speak) was part of Christian Liberty, as if they had a Licence to fulfill their Lusts, and do what they pleased. Did such wild Extravagancies as these need a serious Answer in a Christian Commonwealth, I would send you back to the *Path to Liberty, &c.* where you'll see that the Gospel is the most Holy Institution in the World, design'd for the recovery of Mankind from the degenerate state of lapsed Nature, by healing the Corruptions of it, and repairing on our Souls the Image of God, which consisteth in *Righteousness and true Holiness*, Ephes. 4. 24. compared with Col. 3. 10. which Holy design and drift of the Gospel will further appear if you consider it as the rule of Eternal Judgment, by which the everlasting state of all to whom it is reveal'd shall be determin'd at the last day, when all must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad, 2 Cor. 5. 10. In the mean time, this brief intimation of the Holyness and Purity required in the Gospel, and of the judicial proceedings by

*Not from
Obedience
unto God.*

it, as the Law or Rule of Eternal Judgment sufficiently assures us.

*Nor from
our Obligation to
the Moral
Law.*

3dly, That it doth not wholly void and destroy the obligation of the Moral Law, and so cannot in this respect neither, be stil'd a Law of Liberty; for the Moral Law, (which, the better to distinguish it from the Ceremonial and Judicial, is commonly call'd the Law of Nature, because founded in the very Nature of Man, and the Nature of the things themselves, that are Commanded or Forbidden in it, yea, and in the Nature also of God himself,) is for those Reasons most justly to be reckon'd Eternal, Indispensible, Unchangeable, and Unrepealable. All which being evident, 'tis a contradiction to suppose it Abrogated, or the obligation of it wholly destroy'd by the Gospel; I say wholly destroy'd, because the Gospel doth free and deliver us from the Rigor and Severity of that Moral, Natural, and Perpetual Law: But to fancy or imagine that the Gospel wholly frees us from all obligation either from the Precepts, or Threatnings of the Primitive Law of Nature, is a most gross and palpable Error, absurd in it self, and of very dangerous Consequence in Religion; to pass at present the Manifold absurdities thereof, the dangerous Consequences of it in Religion may hence sufficiently appear, That this was one of the chief Principles of the latter Libertines, and ancient Gnosticks, who took a Liberty to themselves which Christ never granted; for mistaking the Gospel, and fancying it to be all Promise, and whatever was truly and properly Law, to be Abrogated and laid aside, they thought themselves free to live as they were directed by their Lusts, as if the Gospel granted them a Liberty to fulfil them, or a Licence to do what they pleas'd. These were those false Teachers, who privily brought in damnable Heresies, i. e. Damnable and Pernicious Doctrines of Liberty and Licentiousness, and while they promis'd their Disciples such Liberty as this, were themselves the Servants of Corruption, even Slaves to the basest Lusts, 2 Pet. 2. 1. and v. 19. Another Apostle tells us the ground of all, when he Charges

Charges them with *turning the Grace of God into Laciviousness*, Jude 4. that is, with Perverting the Gospel of Christ, and abusing the Doctrine of Christian Liberty, as a pretence and covering to the most vile Impieties; and to prevent all Infections from such Pernicious Doctrines, were those frequent Admonitions, not to use our *Liberty* as an *occasion to the Flesh*, Gal. 5. 13. to make *no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof*, Rom. 13. last, but by *well doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish Men*; as *free, but not using our liberty as a cloak of maliciousness*, 1 Pet. 2. 16. The need of which Admonitions in the Apostles Days, makes it manifest that there were some even in those Times, who turn'd *the grace of God into laciviousness*, abusing Christian Liberty, and making it a Cloak and Covering for Licentiousness and Impiety: Therefore the Apostles give warning against such False and Scandalous Teachers, it being contrary to the Light brought into the World by Christ, to have any fellowship with their Works of Darkness, and the highest Reproach to His Name and Religion, to make Christian Liberty an excuse and covering for them. Now in pursuance of these Apostolical Warnings, it would be proper and pertinent to my present Subject, here to discover and lay open this mystery of Iniquity, and to subvert the Foundation of Libertinism, especially that which I am now upon, which is an Error concerning the obligation of the Moral Law; but because the Rigor and Severity of that Law, is mitigated and abated by the Gospel, and I have plainly shewn you on the one hand how far we are, and on the other how far we are not freed from the said Original Law of Nature, it may at present suffice to add, That the Gospel doth not absolutely and without limitation set us at Liberty, or free us wholly from all obligations of the Moral Law; because if it did, there would then be no place left either for Sin or for the Pardon of it: And no Man, I hope, will question, but that is an Error of no small Importance, which destroys the possibility both of Sin by Disobedience, and of Pardon by the Grace

of God in Christ. For if the Precepts of the Moral Law are not in force, if the Holy and perfect Rules of Righteousness prescrib'd in it, do not oblige us to Obedience, as the Laws of God, there can be no Sin, it being a *Transgression of the Law*, 1 *John* 3. 4. *Rom.* 4. 15. And as for the Threatning also of the Moral Law, it must be acknowledged so far in force unto all Men, as to render every Transgressor Guilty, *i. e.* lyable, and in strictness of Law and Justice, obliged to Suffer the Punishment threatned in it, otherwise there could be no proper Pardon or Forgiveness of Sin by the Grace of the Gospel; for Pardon of Sin being a removal of Guilt, dissolving the obligation to Punishment which by Sinning was Contracted; Where there is no Guilt, there can be no Pardon; where there is no obligation to Punishment, there can be no Remitting of it; that which is not, cannot be dissolv'd; the grossness and absurdity of which most evident Consequence, should, methinks, be sufficient to satisfy all Sober and Christian Minds, that the very threatnings of the Moral Law is not Abrogated by the Gospel: But remains so far in force against all Transgressors of it, as was before asserted, tho' not in its full and primitive force. Nor is this way of arguing for the remaining obligation of the Moral Law, in regard both of its Precepts and Commination, any ways different from theirs, who contended for the Abrogation of it to Believers; for some have not been shy in acknowledging the true Consequences of these False, tho' Beloved Principles, have not only granted, but openly pleaded for them, perswading themselves and others, That God could not see any Sin in them, and consequently that there was neither need of Pardon, nor indeed any place or room for it under the *Gospel*, but only for the comfort and manifestation of it in their Consciences; their Pardon being pass'd in Heaven from all Eternity, in God's acceptance of the Satisfaction of Christ for their Sins. Besides mistaking the end of Christ's obedience to the Law, and fancying that God looks upon them as Righteous with his most perfect Righteousness

teousness formerly imputed to them, they cannot perceive how any Law or Justice can require more, or how any Sin can be justly charg'd on them, so as to need a Pardon, since there was no defect in the Satisfaction or Obedience of Christ, which they impute unto themselves, and account it formally their own. And the Truth is, allowing these Principles, I could never understand how such evil Consequences could possibly be avoided; for supposing a Man to be Righteous with the very Righteousness of Christ, that is, as one of late allows, as Righteous as Christ himself, in whom there was no Sin, How can we imagine that such a one, so compleatly Righteous, could be accus'd of any Sin, or stand in need of Pardon? But these Conceits are the Off-spring and Issue of Ignorance and Error, concerning the design and end of Christ's Obedience to the Moral Law, who was not made under it, to excuse us from our Duty required in it, or to procure a Liberty to Transgress it without any Danger, but to redeem us from its Curse; *i. e.* to obtain Mercy and Pardon for us, upon the condition of a Working Faith, required in his Gospel: And that we might receive the Promise of the Spirit to sanctifie and enable us, especially to Believe and live in new Obedience, *Gal. 3. 13, 14. Christ hath Redeem'd us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us, that the Blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles thro' Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promises of the Spirit thro' Faith.* 'Tis not said that Christ hath Abrogated or Repeal'd, but that he hath Redeem'd us from the Curse of the Law; which Cursed every one that continued not in all things that were written in the Book of the Law to do them, *v. 10.* And the end of his Redemption from it is expres'd in the following words, That the Blessing of Abraham, *i. e.* of Justification by Faith, according to the Terms of the New Covenant, might come on the Gentiles thro' Jesus Christ; not that they should be immediately Pardon'd and Justify'd in all their Idolatries and Wickedness, but that the Blessing of Abraham might come upon them, according to that Antient Evangelical

Promise, by which the Gospel was Preach'd unto *Abraham*, saying, *In thee shall all nations be blessed*, v. 8. Which Blessing of *Abraham* contains in it two Eminent favours among many others, as 1st. The Blessing of *Justification* thro' Faith in Christ, v. 8. and 2^{dly}, The *Promise of the Spirit*, mention'd v. 14. To which Promise, *Zacharias* in his Hymn had respect, when he *Blessed the Lord God of Israel*, because he had visited and redeem'd his People, and perform'd the Oath which he sware unto our Father *Abraham*, That he would grant unto us, that we being deliver'd out of the Hands of our Enemies, might serve him without Fear, in Holiness and Righteousness before him all the days of our Life, *Luke* 1. 74, 75. By which it plainly appears, that the immediate effects of our Redemption by Christ from the Curse of the Law, were not present deliverance and security from the Guilt and Punishment without any further Care; but the Confirmation of the Gospel Covenant, assuring us of Justification or Pardon upon the same Terms that *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful obtain'd them: That is, if we effectually believe as he did, and walk in the steps of that Faith of our Father *Abraham*, who by Faith depended on the Goodness and Power of God, and followed whithersoever the Divine Commands did lead him, *Rom.* 4. 12. compared with *Heb.* 11. v. 8, 9, and 17. to which must be added the promise of the Spirit, that is, the renewing Grace of the Spirit promised to enable us so to believe and walk, and thereby to deliver us from the Power and Dominion of Sin, that we might serve God in Holiness and Righteousness before him all our days as afore. But the excellency and usefulness of this Subject carried me further than at first I intended. To proceed in the

Not from
Punish-
ment.

4th. Place, By what hath been now said, it further appears that the Gospel doth not free us from all sorts and degrees of Punishment for our Sins against the Moral Law. Christian Liberty is neither a Liberty to do Evil, nor a Security from Danger and Punishment if we do: For, that God often Punisheth Believers for their Miscarriages, is so

manifest

manifest from Scripture and Experience, that it may seem needless to go about to prove it. They who deny or doubt of this, seem to have forgotten that Exhortation which speaketh to us as Children, *My Son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him, Heb. 12. 5.* for in all Chastisement there is the true nature of Punishment, tho' there be Love and Kindness always mixed with it, according to the following words, *Heb. 12. 6. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son he receiveth;* the question therefore is not, whether the Chastisements or Corrections of God's offending Children be purely Penal, proceeding merely from Wrath and Justice without any allay of Favour and Love; but whether they are not properly Penal in some respects? whether they are not inflicted for some foregoing Faults, and so to be acknowledged the effects of Sin, as the meritorious Cause and Tokens of God's Displeasure against the Sinner for it? That such Chastisements are not purely penal, or the mere effects of Revenging Justice, will easily be granted; for the very name and nature of Chastisements imply the Contrary: Neither can it (I think) be ever proved that there are ordinarily any such Punishments on this side Hell, that have nothing of Favour and Kindness to the Offenders in them. Sure I am, that even the Sufferings of Evil and Wicked Men, have a natural tendency in them to do them Good, and often prove a most Happy and Successful means of their Amendment and Conversion to God; they are always useful, not only for the Admonition and Warning of others, but for the Awakening and Reformation of the Sufferers themselves, who, if they are not amended by them, must acknowledge it entirely their own fault; this being true even of Wicked and Evil Men, that the Grievances which they Suffer here, do, both in the design of God, and in their own Nature, tend to recover them out of their Sins and Miseries; much more must it be acknowledged true of others, to whom God hath more plainly declar'd his purposes of Love

Love and Kindness in the Corrections he lays upon them, and whose own experience tells them, *it is good for me that I have been afflicted*, Psal. 119. 71. But yet to say or think that full and perfect freedom from all proper Punishment for Sin, even in this present Life, is any part of Christian Liberty, to imagine that there is nothing of Law, Justice, or Divine Displeasure in those Temporal Evils, which by way of Chastisement, God often Inflicted on his Offending Children, that is, to conceive that under the Gospel, Christ hath presently freed them from all Dangers of Suffering any part of the Penalty of Sin threatned in the Law, tho' they most shamefully Violate and Transgress it; so that this should be one Reason, why the Gospel is stiled a Law of Liberty, is a gross and dangerous mistake, both contrary to the Scripture and the Sense of the purest Antiquity. Neither are the Arguments, too often urged in favour of that Opinion, of any force at all, if brought to due examination and tryal; for the chief of them proceed upon great Mistakes and Ignorance, either of the ends of Christ's Satisfaction, or of the intent of our Pardon procur'd by it, and promis'd in the Gospel; or of the Nature of Chastisements and Corrections; or of the meaning of some Texts of Scripture, which rightly understood, are quite to another purpose: All which were easie to be prov'd, but that being in a good measure done already, I shall go on to what I chiefly intend. 'Tis so clear a Truth, that our Holy God is offended with Backsliding Believers for their Sins, and that he often Punishes them for their faults, that I shall presume the freedom from Temporal and Castigatory Punishments will not be thought any Branch of Christian Liberty; there being few, if any Persons to be found, who have not smarted by them, and whose own Consciences will not tell them, that they were the desert and just reward of their Sins.

Nor from
Faith and
Repentance.

5thly and Lastly, To conclude this first part of my undertaking, 'tis plain also that the great Blessings of the Gospel, such as Pardon of Sin, and

and Eternal Life, are Conditionally propounded to us in it, so that you can lay no claim, nor plead any Right unto them, unless the Conditions be perform'd, that is, except we Believe and Repent, and so are truly converted from Sin to God: To be freed therefore from all Conditions of Life and Happiness, is no part neither of the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. 'Tis true, Christ hath freed us from the rigour and severity of the Covenant of Works, that is, he exacteth not perfect and unfinning Obedience as a necessary and indispensable Condition of Life, that now impossible Condition, which was once exacted in the state of Innocence, when Men had strength to keep it. *Tho' it be still our Duty* after which we are always to aspire, yet 'twas never the Condition of Happiness, since the Promise of Christ to our first Parents in Paradise; for ever since that time God hath dealt with Man upon Terms of Mercy and Grace; otherwise all Mankind must unavoidably have perisht, and the whole World have been destroyed: But this Mercy was always so dispensed by the Divine Wisdom, which over-ruleth all Things, that it was still a motive and encouragement for degenerate Man to Repent and Return unto his Duty; there being no other way in which he had any assurance to obtain a Pardon and be made Happy. Some talk of absolute Promises of Pardon, and an unconditional Covenant of Grace, that is, of a Covenant which is indeed no Covenant, but a mere Promise of Blessings from God, without any demand of Duty or Obedience from Man to him, as if God alone were bound, and they themselves were free and had nothing at all to do, to obtain a title to Life and Happiness: These Men forget that the Gospel is a Law, tho' a Law of Liberty, containing in it Precepts, which are the Conditions of its Promises; so that without the performance of them, it gives no assurance of the Benefits and Blessings therein propounded to us. This, were there need, might very largely be prov'd from multitudes of plain and perspicuous Texts of Scripture, which tell us, That the *Mercy* of
of

of God is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, that is, such as keep his Covenant, and remember his Commandments to do them, Ps. 103. 17, 18. But our Saviour himself hath done the business in a few words, expressly declaring, That not every one that saith unto him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the will of his father which is in Heaven, Matt. 7. 21.

Thus I have finished the First part of my undertaking, which was to shew wherein our Christian Liberty did not consist, that none might be Seduced to use, or rather abuse it, as a cloak of Maliciousness, and that all might the better understand its due bounds, least whilst they promise themselves Liberty, they should continue Slaves and Servants to Corruption. But all that hath been hitherto said, was not to discourage or debar any Christian of any the least part of that Liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free; God forbid that I, or any one else should do so, for that were to lessen, disparage, and obscure the Grace of God in the Gospel, and to detain the Free-men of Christ in that Bondage, from which he came to deliver them. Far be it from any Christian, especially from a Minister of Christ, to attempt sounworthy a design; for Liberty there is, yea, a manifold and most blessed Liberty brought into the World by Christ, of which the Year of Jubilee under the Law, Redemption from Egyptian Bondage, and Deliverance from the Babylonish Captivity, were but Figures and Types of this Spiritual and Happy Liberty, *Isaiah* Prophesied, Chap. 61. 1. which Prophecy was our Saviour's Text in the Synagogue of Nazareth, when he Preach'd the Gospel to the Poor, Deliverance to the Captive, Recovery of Sight to the Blind, and Liberty to them that were Bruised, viz. through Spiritual Imprisonments and Bonds, *Luke* 4. 18. compared with *Isai.* 61. 1. Now in respect of this Liberty foretold by the Prophet, Preach'd by our Saviour, and Purchas'd for us by his Death; his Gospel, wherein it is proclaim'd, is most justly stiled a Law of Liberty. Which brings me to the

II. And

H. And chief enquiry, that is, Why or in what respects the Gospel is so called, which must be answered affirmatively by shewing in what particular Priviledges and Immunities this Liberty, *Wherein Christ's Liberty does consist.* typified in the Law, foretold by the Prophets, purchased by Christ, and proclaim'd in his Gospel, doth consist. Now to understand this aright, 'twill be very useful to consider what the Thralldom or Bondage was which Mankind lay under, untill freed or set at Liberty by Christ; for this Bondage being first explain'd, we must needs the better understand Gospel-liberty or Freedom from it. Now this Bondage was either to Sin, or the Evils Consequent upon it; or to the Law either of *Moses* or of Nature in regard to its Curse and Threatning. Accordingly the Freedom and Liberty promis'd by Christ, is either a Liberty from Sin and its evil Consequents and Effects, or from the Law, both of *Moses* and of Nature too, in its Rigor and Severity, or considered, as a Covenant of Works. More particular this Liberty is,

1st. A Liberty from Sin and its evil Consequents and Effects. *In a Liberty from Sin.*

2d. A Liberty from the Law of *Moses* and of Nature too, consider'd in its Rigor or as a Covenant Works. *In a Liberty from the Law, &c.*

Liberty from Sin consists, First, in a Liberty from the Power and Dominion of Sin, by Sanctification and Renewing of our Natures.

Secondly, From the Guilt of Sin, by Pardon and Justification of our Persons, for to Christ we are beholden for both; the first being a Fruit of his Spirit, the other a Priviledge annex'd, and both of them the purchase and effects of his Death.

Thirdly, from the Punishment of Sin; from the Tyranny of Satan; from the Fear of Death; and from all Evils and Miseries whatsoever: From Hell and Damnation; from Corruption and Rotteness in the Grave; so as at last to bring us into Heaven, called the Liberty of Glory, or Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God.

2dly, A Liberty from the Law of *Moses* and of Nature too, consider'd in its Rigor, or as a Covenant of Works, consists, *First,*

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

First, In a Liberty from the Yoke and Bondage of the Ceremonial Law.

Secondly, From the Judicial Law.

Thirdly, From the Mosaical Administration of the Moral as well as Ceremonial Law. And,

Fourthly, From the Curse and Rigor of the same Moral Law, or Law of Nature, considered in its strict and extended Sense, as containing all those most Perfect and Eternal Rules of Righteousness, by which all Mankind are obliged to exact an unfinning Obedience upon Pain of Death, for every failure, commonly call'd the Covenant of Works: From the Rigor, I say, of this Law, that is, from the now impossible Condition of Life and Happiness required in this Law, we are freed by the Gospel, tho' not from its bare Obligation to Duty and Obedience; all which is enough to Denominate the Gospel a Law of Liberty.

*Liberty
from the
Dominion
of Sin
what.*

First, The Gospel proclaims a Liberty from the Power and Dominion of Sin, by Mortification of our Lusts, and renewing of our Natures, which is call'd putting on the new Man, which after God is Created in Righteousness and true Holyness, Eph. 4. 24. which tho' it will not be fully perfected, untill we come to Heaven, when that saying shall be compleatly fulfill'd, that *Christ shall present unto himself a Glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle*, Eph. 5. 27. Yet 'tis begun in all, in whose Hearts the Gospel effectually Worketh, and ought dayly to encrease by a continued growth in Grace, and Progress in the ways of Holyness, notwithstanding all opposition from the World; that we may say with the Apostle, we do not faint, but tho' *our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. yea, tho' some relicts of Sin will cleave unto us as long as we dwell in these Tabernacles of Clay, yet the Power of it is weakned, and Dominion of it destroy'd in all true Members of Christ, who are free, tho' not totally from the assault, yet truly from the Slavery and Service of Sin. This freedom from the Dominion of Sinful Lusts, is evidently the meaning of our Saviour, *Joh. 8. 31, 32.* when he said to the Jews

that

that Believ'd on him, if ye *continue in my words*, i. e. if ye persevere in Faith and Obedience to my Doctrine, *then are ye my Disciples indeed, and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free*, that is, shall rescue and deliver you from the Tyranny and Reigning Power of your Corrupt and Sinful Lusts. For when the *Jews*, not understanding our Saviour's Words, were offended at this promise of freedom, and boasted of their own Native freedom, as being *the Children of Abraham*, v. 33. *Jesus* answer'd them, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*, v. 34. As if he had said, ye are much mistaken in your conceit of freedom, for there is another kind of Servitude which ye think not of; a Spiritual Servitude or Bondage under the Dominion of Sin, far worse than any Corporal Slavery whatsoever, from which, your Honourable Pedigree and Descent from *Abraham* is no security at all; for whosoever he be, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, of Mean or Noble Extraction, if he lead a Vicious Life, if he be Rul'd by his own Tyrannical Lusts and Passions, he is in a real, tho' Spiritual sense, enslav'd to them, and so indeed a Servant and Slave of Sin; it being a general and most certain Rule, *That his servants ye are to whom ye obey*, Rom. 6. 16. *or of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought in Bondage*, 2 Pet. 2. 19. Of freedom from this Spiritual Bondage under the Dominion of Sinful Lusts, our Saviour therefore speak, when he said, *if ye continue in my word, the Truth shall make you free*, v. 32. as also when he added, v. 36, *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be freed indeed, and no longer the servants of Sin*, as v. 34. Where to *commit Sin*, signifies more than simply to Sin, to commit a single act of Sin thro' infirmity or surprisal, for 'tis spoken of Evil Men, who lived in a Course of gross Sins; to whom our Saviour afterwards said, *ye are of your Father the Devil, and the lust of your Father ye will do*, v. 44. So the Sin in the Language of St. Paul had Dominion over them, and they obey'd it in the Lusts thereof, for which Reason, our Saviour might call them Servants of Sin; because to whom

ye yield your selves servants to obey, his Servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness, Rom. 6. 16. and for the same Reason, speaking of the Licentious Gnosticks, who spoke great swelling words of Vanity, alluring their Disciples to gratify their basest Lusts, under the specious pretence of Liberty, St. Peter tells us, *they themselves were the servants of corruption*, 2 Pet. 2. 19. From this Servitude Christ will make us free, by revealing unto us his Father's Will, so that we shall know the Truth, and be freed by it, not only from the *Law of Moses*, that Yoke of Bondage, that neither ye nor your forefathers were able to bear; but from the *Law of Sin* also (as the Apostle calls it) that is, from the commanding Power of your Lusts, from the Rule and Dominion of Carnal Affection, which the *Law of Moses*, without the *Gospel*, could not Conquer or Subdue, as St. Paul shews, Rom. 7. 5, 8. And this promise of our Saviour, of freeing his Disciples from the *Law and Power of Sin*, by the Superior Power and Efficacy of the *Truth*, which he would make known unto them, was effectually fulfilled in *them* who continued in his Word. And so were his Disciples indeed, and particularly St. Paul, who after a long complaint of the Weakness and Inefficacy of the Law to Subdue and Mortify the Motions of Sin or Sinful Affections of Men, Rom. 7. 5. &c. thanked God for his deliverance through Christ, from that sad estate, v. 24, 25. and then as it were triumph'd in that Happy Conquest, Rom. 8. 1, 2. *There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit, for the Law of the Spirit of Life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin of Death.* Thus was the formention'd promise of our Saviour verified; for by the *Truth*, which he said would make you free, was doubtless meant his *Gospel*, attended with the renewing Grace of his quickning Spirit, and is the same with the *Law of the Spirit of Life*, which, saith the Apostle, *hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death*; not only from Death, but from the

the *Law of Sin* also; 1st. from the *Law of Sin*, and then from Death; that is, *First*, from the Commanding Power of fleshly Lusts, from the Reign and Dominion of Sin, which is compared to a Law, in regard of its Rule and Government in evil Men, who suffer it to Reign over them, and obey it in the Lusts thereof. And this freedom from the Law of Sin, is wrought by the real Mortification of Fleshly Lusts, which is the Reason why the freemen of Christ *walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit*, v. 1. *Secondly*, from Death; that is, from the Guilt of Sin, or Obligation to Eternal Punishment, the Wages of it; and this is done by Forgiveness and Pardon, and is the immediate Reason, why there is *no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*, another Branch of Christian freedom, of which we are to speak hereafter.

Not to digress therefore from my present Subject, hitherto the case is very plain, that freedom from Sin, *i. e.* from the Reign and Dominion, from the Tyranny and Commanding Power, from the Slavery and Service of Sin, is a principal part of that happy Liberty, which is proclaim'd to us in the Gospel of Christ, and in reference whereunto, it is stiled a Law of Liberty. So that the issue and conclusion of all is this, That he who is yet a Slave unto his Lusts, he (whoever he be) that is still a *Servant of Sin*, *John* 8. 34. and in *bondage to Corruption*, *2 Pet.* 2. 12. he that *suffers sin to reign over him, and obeys it in the Lusts thereof*, is not freed by Christ, nor partaker of this Blessed Liberty proclaimed in his Gospel; for as in the year of *Jubilee* under the *Law*, (the type of *Christian freedom* under the *Gospel*) Liberty was proclaim'd throughout the *Land unto all the Inhabitants of it*, *Lev.* 25. 10. and Servants were to be set free and discharg'd from the service of all other Masters, that they might be the Lord's and serve him only, whose Servants they always were, v. 55. So now under the Gospel, Spiritual Liberty and Freedom from the servitude of Sin, is proclaim'd to us through the Grace of Christ, that Sin may not Reign in our *Mortal body, nor we obey it in the Lusts thereof*,

thereof, Rom. 6. 12. but *that we may serve God in Righteousness and Holiness before him all the Days of our Life.* Yet as in the Seventh year, or year of Rest, which was likewise a year of Freedom, if a Servant loved his Master, and plainly said, I will not go out free; he was to have his Ear *board thro' with an Aul, and to serve for ever, Exod. 21. 5, 6.* So if we Love our Sins, and are resolv'd not to leave them; if we like the Service of our Lusts better than the Service of Christ, and chuse to continue in Slavery when Christ invites us to Freedom, we are still in a state of Misery and Bondage, and can neither pretend to this Spiritual Liberty of real Christians, nor expect the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God.

Object.

Objection. But some may here reply, What strange Doctrine is this, there's a great stir to little purpose? What is this all the *Liberty* brought unto us by Christ? Is there no better and more desirable Liberty than this promis'd to us in the Gospel? We thought we had been free in other Respects, and by our freedom excus'd from this which you call Liberty, but we account a Yoke of Bondage; for you seem to place *Christian Liberty* in forsaking the Service of Sin, and betaking our selves to the Service of God; so that we must be Servants still, and where is then our Liberty? To tell us we are freed from the Law of *Moses*, and still to impose Obedience on us to more Pure and Spiritual Commands, which you call the Laws of *Christ*, will not mend the matter; for what is this but to take off one, and put another Yoke on the Necks of his Disciples which they are not able to bear? To which I answer,

Answer.

Liberty from the Dominion of Sin, not all.

But 'tis the Principal part of Christian Liberty.

First, That 'tis very true, this Liberty from the Service and Dominion of Sin, whereof I now speak, is not all the Liberty to which the Faithful are restored by Christ; and I have already purposed several other Parts and Branches of it, to be hereafter explain'd in their Order. But then,

Secondly, This is one part of Christian Liberty, and that too a principal one, without which we have no ground to expect the other, which I call

freedom.

freedom from Guilt and Punishment; for certainly *Christian Liberty* is not a Liberty to Sin without Fear or Danger: 'Tis not, I say, a Liberty to Sin, but a Liberty from Sin, *i. e.* first from the Service and Dominion of it, and then from the Guilt and Punishment. This is the method of Christ, this is the order of his Gospel, first to Change, and then to Accept us; first to Convert us from our Sins, and then to *Blot them out*, *Acts 3. 19.* first to make us Holy, and then to make us Happy; first to *turn us from darkness unto light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*, and so to qualify and make us capable of *receiving forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are Sanctified*, *Acts 26. 18.*

Thirdly, This is not at all consistent with true *Christian Liberty*; for the Service of God was never counted any Slavery, nor a State of Holiness a State of Bondage, unless it were by Hypocrites and Vicious Persons, to whom every thing seems a trouble, that gives any check or controulment to their Lusts. But such are ill judges of true Liberty, who take their Measure of it by Corrupt Affections, whose inward Dominion is the greatest Tyranny: Were their Eyes open to see and discern the Truth, they might easily perceive, that, that which they call Liberty, is indeed a State of Bondage; for the genuine Nature of our Souls, as they came out of the Hands of God, was to act freely according to the Native Principles of Truth and Righteousness which he implanted in them; nor was Man ever the Subject of a greater freedom, than when there was a perfect Harmony and Agreement between the Superior Powers of his Soul, without any jarring Discord or Rebellion from Carnal and Sensitive Affections. When he fell from that estate, he fell from God, the Fountain of Peace and Happiness, into a State of War and Violence within himself: Conscience and his Lusts, Reason and Carnal Appetites, daily opposing one another, in which unhappy Combate, the Carnal part prevailing, the Man is *brought into Captivity to the Law of Sin*, *Rom. 7. 23.* and now he must

This freedom from the Dominion of Sin, not inconsistent with true Christian Liberty.

needs be a *Wretched Man* in this Estate, v. 24. for being a *Captive* unto his Sins, besides his present *Slavery*, he is lyable to all the *Curses* that attend it in this or the other World; How can we then desire a more *Blessed Liberty* in this Life, than to be deliver'd from this *Captivity* to Sin? That is, to have our Sins subdued, our Lusts mortified, our Corrupt Affections Conquer'd, and kept under by the Grace of Christ. This surely is the truest Liberty, and when Christ hath thus made us free, then, and not till then, we are free indeed; for this is a restoring of us to the True and Primitive freedom of our Rational Souls, in the Perfection whereof in Heaven, our Eternal Happiness will very much consist: For being perfectly freed from Sin, the cause of all our Misery, what can hinder us from being for ever Happy?

This must suffice for answer to the forgoing Objections: But because a right understanding of this part of *Christian Liberty*, is highly useful, not only to rectify some Mistakes about it, but also to quicken and excite us earnestly to strive and contend for it, I shall more particularly shew,

1st. That a State of Sin unmortify'd and unsubdu'd, is usually in the Scripture call'd *Servitude* and *Bondage*.

2^{dly}, That it is justly call'd so, Evil Men being indeed *Servants* and *Slaves* to their Lusts. So that

3^{dly}, Freedom from this *Slavery* to Sin, is a very happy and valuable liberty in its self, besides all the *Blessed* priviledges that attend it.

4^{thly}, That this is indeed that *Liberty* which is meant in the Gospel, in several, tho' not all Places that make mention of such a *Priviledge*.

5^{thly}, That 'tis not only the Duty, but a Mark and Character of a true Christian, by which he is distinguished from *Hypocrites* and *Evil Men*.

A State of Sin unmortified, is in the Scripture call'd a State of Bondage.

First, A State of Sin unmortified and unsubdu'd, is usually in the Scripture call'd *Servitude* and *Bondage*; To this Purpose we have heard several Texts already, wherein Evil Men are stil'd the *Servants* of Sin, and said to be in *Bondage* to *Corruption* which is true of all in some degree or other, un

less set at Liberty and made free by Christ ; for we our selves also, saith the Apostle, were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, Tit. 3. 3. That is, until they were saved and deliver'd from that Servitude, by the washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, as it follows, v. 5. In the Sixth Chapter to the Romans the Apostle speaks of Sin as a Tyrant Usurping Dominion in the World, and the scope of the whole Chapter is, to dissuade us from its Service, that it may not Reign over us, nor are such expressions without a Cause ; for,

Secondly, The Tyranny of Sin is such, that it makes Men very Slaves and Vassals to their Lusts : It is not for nothing that they are said to be in Bondage to Corruption ; for a Vicious Life is a greater Slavery, and the Devil a harder Task-Master than all Men will believe, putting his Servants on the basest Service, and Tormenting them for it when they have done ; some of the Wiser Heathens observ'd as much : For *Diogenes* was wont to say, *That besides the Names, there was no difference between Evil Masters and their Servants, but that the Servants serv'd their Masters, and their Masters serve their Lusts.* Than which, there were not greater Tyrants in the World, said *Pythagoras*. And truly he that will observe, how Vicious Persons are Enslav'd to them, or in the Language of the Scripture, how they weary themselves to commit Iniquity, need not wonder, that the Light of Nature and Common Reason should thus Condemn their Folly, Their most beloved Sins, in which they spend their Time and Strength, are generally attended with such Vexation and Pains, that render their Lives more troublesom, than would the strictest Rules of Piety, and all the Austerities of Religion. So that,

Thirdly, Christian Freedom from the Dominion of Sin, is a very happy and valuable Liberty in it self, besides all the blessed Priviledges that attend it ; it is not easie to express the Peace and Tranquility of Mind, the Ease and Rest both to Body and Soul, which it brings. Where there nothing

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else, this certainly is enough to commend that Religion to us, which heartily embrac'd, must needs make us Happy. Is it nothing to be freed from the Cares of Covetousness; from the Swellings of Pride; from the Torment of Envy; from the Burnings of Anger; and Vexation of Revenge; from the Tyranny and Dominion of all Imperious and Accursed Lusts which reign in Wicked Men? But whatever our Thoughts be of it, 'tis manifest,

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Fourthly, That this is that Liberty or freedom which is chiefly intended in several Texts in the *New Testament*, wherein there is mention of our Redemption, Deliverance, and consequent Freedom by Christ; for besides the places which I have already quoted, what else can be meant by the words of *St. Paul*, in the Sixth Chapter to the *Romans* 17th and 18th Verses, where he gives thanks to God, that they who once had been the Servants of Sin, had obeyed from the Heart the form of Doctrine deliver'd to them, and so being made free from Sin, were become the Servants of Righteousness. Where the service of Righteousness is oppos'd by the service of Sin, and made the consequent fruit of their freedom from it. Whereupon he Exhorteth them to maintain this Freedom, by yielding their Members Servants to Righteousness, as they had formerly yielded them Servants to Uncleanness. v. 19. that is, That they should utterly Relinquish the service of Sin, and adict themselves wholly to the service of Righteousness, or of God, v. 22. that as when they were the Servants of Sin, they were free from Righteousness, or lived as if they had been so, not allowing it any of their Service, v. 20. So now being made free from Sin, that is, having renounc'd its service in the undertaking of Christianity, and become the Servants of Gods, they might have their Fruit unto Holiness, and the end Everlasting Life. This he further presseth from the end and reward of the two contrary Services, v. 23: For the wages of Sin is Death, &c. Where the first words, the wages of Sin is Death, are not meant of the desert only, but of the event, that is, he doth not only

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mean; that sin deserveth death, but that death, *even eternal Death*, shall still under the Gospel be the certain reward of Sin continued in, and unrepented of; for he is speaking of the service of Sin, and living under its reign and dominion, and dissuading us from it, by shewing the necessity of leaving it, and giving up our selves to the service of God and Religion. To this purpose he sets before us the different and contrary Rewards that in these two contrary services are to be expected. *The wages of sin is death, &c.* that is, the Servants of Sin shall be rewarded with eternal Misery, but the *Servants of God with eternal Happiness and Glory*. This is plainly the sense of the Words, as will be evident to any that shall read the former part of the Chapter; so that they are to be understood of the contrary issues of a sinful and a holy Life: For as in the latter part the Apostle speaks of Eternal life, as the sure and certain, tho' free and gracious reward of the Servants of God and Religion; so in the former part he speaks also of the certain Punishment of the Servants of Sin in the event, as well as of their desert of punishment at present. And therefore in the

5th, and last place, This Freedom from the Service and Reign of Sin is necessary in every Christian, that hopes for Eternal Life; for 'tis not only a Duty, but a Mark and Character of difference by which a Child of God is distinguish'd from Hypocrites and evil Men, the Heirs of Hell and Death. It's a great mistake to think that a bare Contention against Sin, mere striving against it without success, is any certain and infallible Mark of a Regenerate Man, or Child of God; for the unregenerate often feel the Fight, but yield unto the enemy, and are carried Captive by it; That which makes the difference is Victory and Conquest, *John 5. 4. He that is born of God overcometh the World; and this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith*. Now tho' this Victory be not perfect, yet 'tis a Victory, by which the Faithful are freed from that state, which the Scripture call'd *captivity and bondage unto Sin*; they are freed, tho' not

This freedom from Sin, not only the Duty, but also the Mark of a Christian.

from all incursions or renewed Combats with their Enemy, in which they may sometimes be surpris'd, yet from the Reign, Dominion and Law of Sin. Sin doth not so Rule as to give the Law to them, and keep them under Servitude: For the law of the Spirit of Life hath made them free from the law of Sin as well as Death, as was shewn before from *Rom. 8. 2.* free, I say, not only from Death, but from the law of Sin too, that is, from the reigning and commanding power of corrupt and sinful Lusts; *so that being made free from Sin, or the service of it, they are become servants to God, Rom. 6. 22.* and so are no longer *under the dominion of Sin, v. 14.* This is a true description of the Children of God, who renouncing the service of Sin, are adopted into the privilege of Sons, and made Heirs of Eternal Life: And this description cannot agree to any, who only strive against sin; and get no victory over it; who tho' they condemn it, and cry out against it, yet suffer themselves to be carried away captive by it; for tho' they verbally disclaim, yea, and really resist it, yet if after resistance they are still overcome, they are still led into captivity and bondage to it, according to the Apostle's rule, *2 Pet. 2. 19. Of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. Tho' therefore the flesh lusteth against the spirit, even in the regenerate children of God, yet the spirit lusteth against the flesh also,* and here is the difference, that they are *led by the spirit, and so walk after the spirit, and not after the flesh, Rom. 8. 9.* The Spirit is victorious and prevaieth with them, they not only consent unto his Truths, and approve his Counsels, but moreover entertain his Doctrine, attend his Motions, obey his Will, fulfill his Pleasure, and are conducted by him in all their ways, delighting in his Commandments, rejoicing in his Comforts, and imploring his Aid for ever. This is to *walk after the spirit*, and to be led by the Spirit of God, the surest Mark and Character of his Children; for as many as are *led by the spirit of God, they are the Sons of God, Rom. 8. 14.* As many, that is, just so many and no more; all they, and only they, that

that are led by this Holy Guide, are the Children of God, and may expect all fatherly usage from him in this World, and an everlasting Inheritance in the other. For *to be led by the Spirit*, must needs signify to follow after Holiness in compliance with his holy Motions, to be govern'd and guided by him in the paths of God's Commandments, it being impossible that His holy Spirit should lead us in any other; nor can we be truly said to be led by Him, unless, observing his Directions, we follow and obey them, practising what God hath Commanded in his Word, and by his Spirit excites and enables us to do, this is the constant Mark of the Children of God, by which they may be known; For if ye know *that he is Righteous, ye know that every one that doth Righteousness is born of him*, John 2. 29. As a Child may be known by his likeness to his Father, so every one that by true and unfeigned Righteousness imitates and resembles the most Holy and Righteous God, may likewise be known to be regenerate and born of Him: But here *let no Man deceive you* (saith the same Apostle) *for he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous*, Chap. 3. 7. Not every one that imputes Righteousness to himself, and counts himself Righteous, but he that *doth Righteousness is Righteous*, as his Pattern, or as Christ himself was Righteous upon the same ground of Obedience unto God. And in this *the Children of God are manifest, and the children of the Devil*, i. e. this is a sure and certain Character of difference between them, by which they are distinguish'd from one another; *Whosoever doeth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother*, John 3. 10. In short, the Spirit of God is a Spirit of Love and Righteousness, and to Love and Righteousness his Office is to lead us, and tho' the *Flesh* will be *lustful against the Spirit*, we must be very careful to check, and not suffer it to do any more; for if *ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if through the spirit ye do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live*, Rom. 8. 13. To be deliver'd and freed from the burthen of the *Flesh*, is the state and happiness of the blessed Spi-
rites

rits of just Men made perfect in Heaven ; and to mortify and subdue the Lusts of the Flesh, and bring it in subjection to the Spirit, is the work of every true Christian on Earth : They have the Spirit, and they have the *Flesh also*, and *these two are contrary to one another*, Gal. 5. 17. so that there must needs be a strife and contention between them : But in the Regenerate the Spirit is Victorious and habitually prevails, by which means the Flesh is kept under, and Sin doth not reign over them, nor they obey it in the lusts thereof ; the dominion of it is destroyed in them, and they are govern'd by better Principles of Grace and Goodness, and therefore are said to be free from Sin, because they have renounced his service, and do no longer obey it as their Lord and Master.

But because this is the great difference between a regenerate and unregenerate Person, that is, between a true Child of God and a Slave of Sin, that in one the Spirit prevails, in the other the Flesh is victorious ; the one doing the Will of God, the other fulfilling the Lusts of the Flesh ; I shall yet insist a little longer on it, and endeavour more fully to clear this weighty and Important Truth : That it is not a mere strife and contention against Sin, but victory and conquest, that distinguisheth a servant of God from a servant of Sin ; a regenerate from an unregenerate Man. By the way, take notice that I do not speak of a total victory, or perfect and absolute freedom from all incursions and assaults of Sin ; but such a Victory, wherein the carnal part, or sinful Lusts of the Flesh are so far mortified and overcome, that the dominion of Sin may truly be said to be destroyed, and the Spirit to bear rule and prevail in the Soul. This the Apostle plainly affirms of all that are in Christ, by telling us, that *they walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit ; the law of the spirit of Life having made them free from the law of Sin, as well as from Death*, Rom. 8. 12. a place which will deserve some further consideration, tho' it hath been in part explain'd already. For the better understanding of it, and the excellency of the Gospel or Law of Christ above the Law

Law of *Moses*, we must observe that the Apostle *St. Paul* there and in former Chapters, speaks of four different or distinct Laws, that is, *mentions four kinds of Laws.*

1st, The *Law of Sin*.

2dly, The *Law of Moses*,

3dly, The *Law of the Mind*.

4thly, Of the *Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*.

Of which Four, the Three last are all of them opposite to the first, *i. e.* all contrary and repugnant to the Law of Sin; but neither of them are able to overcome it, besides, or without the Gospel, or Law of the Spirit of Life: For to *this* his freedom from the Law of Sin, is ascribed by the Apostle in the last cited words, *The Law of the Spirit of Life hath made me free from the Law of Sin, which the Law of Moses could not do, v. 3, 4.*

I. I say there is the *Law of Sin*, from which the *The Law* Apostle was freed by the law of the spirit of Life in of Sin. *Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 2. This law of Sin from which he was freed, is that whereof he complain'd in his former unregenerate state, Chap. 7. 21. *I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me; this he calls the Law of Sin, v. 25. and a law in his Members, warring against the law of his Mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of Sin, which was (then) in his Members, Ch. 7. 23.* For tho' there be a redundancy in these words, 'tis evident that the law in the Members, and the law of Sin are the same, and therefore both are joyn'd together in the close of the Verse, and call'd the law of Sin which is in the Members: Now by this law of Sin in the Members, from which he says he was made free, by the law of the spirit of Life, which is in Christ Jesus, Chap. 8. 2. and for which freedom or deliverance, he giveth thanks unto God, Chap. 7. 24, 25. I say, by this law of Sin, from which he was deliver'd and made free by the Gospel and Spirit of Christ, must needs be meant the power and dominion of the Corrupt and Carnal part, the strength and prevalency of unmortified Lusts, which rule and govern unregenerate Persons, and for

for that reason are fitly compared to a Law : For the truth is, their Lusts are their Laws, and prevail over them more than any other Laws either of God or Man : Sometimes Covetousness is their Law, sometimes Pride, sometimes Malice and Revenge, sometimes other Carnal and Corrupt Affections, which are but so many particular instances of the general Law of Sin, by which they are governed, whilst Sin reigneth in them, and they obey it in the Lusts thereof. This law of Sin is that *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός*, *fleshly Mind*, or Mind of the flesh, *νῦν σαρκός*, Col. 2. 18. that Carnal Mind which in Unsanctified Men is enmity against God, and is *not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*, Rom. 8. 7. for the lusts of the Flesh, the law of Sin in the Members, or motions of the Carnal Appetites, are contrary to the Dictates of the Spirit and Commands of God ; so that whilst a Man is under the law of Sin, guided and governed by his Carnality and Lusts, he is an Enemy to God, and cannot be subject to his Laws, because he is yet subject to a contrary law, *i. e.* ruled by the law of Sin, or governed by his Lusts, which prevail as so many laws, and keep him in subjection to them, and so both make and denominate him a Servant and Slave of Sin, in which Condition the case is clear, that he is not freed by Christ ; for this is a general rule, *that they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24.

Besides the law of Sin, there are Three other laws mentioned by the Apostle, and all of them contrary and opposite to it, all opposing and contradicting that evil Principle in Carnal Men, which is called the Law of Sin, tho' with different success ; Two of them being overpower'd by the law of Sin, or the Strength, and prevalency of Corrupted Nature, the Third only, which is the Gospel, *or law of the Spirit of Life, being able to deliver or free us from it*, Rom. 7. 24, 25. Chap. 8. 2.

*The law
of Moses.*

II. Here is the *Law of Moses*, *i. e.* the Moral Law of God delivered to *Israel* by the Ministry of *Moses* on Mount *Sinai* : This is call'd the
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the *Law of God*, to distinguish it from the *Law of the Mind*, Rom. 4. 25. and simply the *Law*, without any addition for distinction sake, at least Eleven times in that one Chapter; 'tis also in the same Chapter, several times call'd the *Commandment*, because in respect of its preceptive part, it was so indeed, even the *Commandment of Almighty God*, otherwise it had not properly been a *Law*; yea, I conceive 'tis the same *Law*, i. e. the *Law of Moses*, which in regard of its threatning, is also call'd the *Law of Death*, Rom. 28. for tho' the *Commandment was ordain'd for Life*, it was (in the issue) found to be unto *Death*, Rom. 7. 10. because being broken, it Condemn'd the Transgressor to die for his Violations of it, and is therefore call'd the *Ministration of Death and Condemnation*, 2 Cor. 3. 7, 9.

This *Law of Moses* was opposite to the *Law of Sin*, and given on purpose to restrain Men from sinful Courses; so the Apostle elsewhere tells us, saying, *the Law was added because of Transgression*, Gal. 3. 19, that is, to curb and restrain Men from their evil Practices, and keep them within the bounds of Duty. And this the *Law of Moses* did,
 1st. By discovering Sin, and convicting the Conscience of it, Rom. 7. 7. *I had not known Sin but by the Law.*

2dly, By making Sin to appear the more Sinful, Rom. 7. 13. *for by the Law offences did abound*, Rom. 5. 20. that is, were aggravated and encreased in their Criminousness; or became more Sinful and Inexcusable, being committed against an expresse and promulgate Law.

3dly, By shewing the danger of Sin, and declaring the Wrath and Curse of God against it.

4thly, By Promising Life and Prosperity in the Land of *Canaan*, as a motive and encouragement to Obedience.

All these ways the *Law of Moses* oppos'd the *Law of Sin*; but of it self, and without the Grace of the Gospel, could not overcome or free Men from it. That Law might outwardly restrain them in some Cases, but it could not inwardly change

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change and renew them; it might check, and in some measure suppress, but it could not subdue and mortify Carnal Affections, so as to free a Man from the Reign and Dominion of them. This freedom from the Law and Dominion of Sin, is the effect and glory of the Gospel alone, attended with the *Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 3. All those Holy Men who were freed from it under the *Old Testament*, and so became the Servants of God and True Righteousness, were even then deliver'd from the Bondage of Sin, not by the Law of *Moses*, as in the *Jewish* sense it stands oppos'd to the Gospel, but by the Mercy of a better Covenant, by the Grace of God thro' Christ, promis'd first in *Paradise*, and afterwards to *Abraham*, 430 Years before the *Mosaick* law was givven, Gal. 3. 17. The Law indeed was *Spiritual, Holy, Just, and Good*; but Man, in his natural state and unrenew'd by the Gospel, was *Carnal and sold under Sin*, Rom. 7. 12, 14. And from this Carnality or Bondage unto Sin, could not be freed or deliver'd by the Law *Mosaical*, as the Apostle shews, Rom. 7. 5. *When we were in the flesh, the motions of Sin, which were by the Law, did work in our Members to bring forth fruit unto Death. i. e.* When we lived in our former Carnal State, under the discipline of the Law, as given by *Moses*, without the grace and truth came by *Jesus Christ*, John 1. 17. then our sinful Affections and Lusts, which were discover'd, aggravated, and made the more Sinful by the exprefs Prohibition of the Law, did still effectually prevail in us, and lead us on to many Sins, the bitter fruit whereof was Death Eternal, see *James* 1. 15. And this is the Reason why they were delivered from the Law, that is, from the Weak and Ineffectual Discipline of *Moses*, and brought to the more Powerful Dispensation of Grace under the Gospel; from the *Ministry of the Letter*, to the *Ministration of the Spirit* (2 Cor. 3. 6, 8.) that they might bring forth fruit unto God, and serve him in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the Letter, Rom. 7. 4, 6. So that the Apostle's design in the Seventh

to the *Romans*, is not to leave us lawless, by exempting us from all obligation to obedience unto the Commands of God; but to bring us from *Moses* unto *Christ*, from *Judaism* to *Christianity*; that being assisted by the Spirit of *Christ*, we might mortify the deeds of the body (*Rom. 8. 3.*) and crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, *Gal. 5. 24.* bringing the Fruits of Righteousness unto God, and serving him all our days in that new and spiritual Obedience required in the Gospel. And in order hereunto, to shew that the Law, as deliver'd by *Moses*, without the help of the Spirit of *Christ*, was insufficient and unable to work this Blessed Change; or that the *Mosaical* law in the *Jewish* notion of it, as it stands in opposition to the Gospel, could never free them from the Law and Dominion, or deliver them from the Captivity or Servitude of Sin; which, notwithstanding all the Prohibitions and Thund'rings of the Law of *Moses*, still prevail'd in them, till they became Christians, and were made free by the Law of the Spirit, &c. This freedom from the Law of Sin, i. e. from the Reign, Dominion or Captivity of Sin, or from the Commanding Power of sinful Lusts, was part of that which the law of *Moses* could not do, for it was weak through the flesh, *Rom. 8. 3.* that is, thro' the excessive wickedness and sinfulness of the Flesh; the Carnality and Viciousness of Man's Heart, being so strong and prevalent within them, that the law of *Moses* alone could not conquer and subdue it; so that the law was weak, not absolutely and in it self, but thro' the strength and prevalency of Sin in the Flesh, which still got the Mastery, and as it were gave them laws, and kept them in bondage and subjection to it.

And this is apparently that which *St. Paul* more largely proves in *Rom. 7.* where his business is to bring off the *Jews* from the law of *Moses*, to the Gospel of *Christ*; for to that end he shews the excellency of the Gospel above the Law, as requiring a more pure and spiritual Service, and affording the Grace and Assistance of the Spirit to enable us to perform it, and to suppress and mortify the motions

tions of Sin, or sinful Lusts and Affections, which otherwise would certainly keep them from it; whereas the law of it self, did only exact Obedience, and that in a great measure unto Carnal Ordinances, discovering Sin, aggravating of it, and condemning Transgressors for it; but administering no inward Grace or Strength to withstand it, and perform the obedience required, v. 4, 5, 6. Now least this should seem a disparagement to the law *Mosaick*, the Apostle both raises and answers an Objection, v. 7. *What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.* In the pursuance of which answer, he spends the remainder of that Chapter, maintaining the Holiness, Justice, Goodness, Spirituality and Excellency of the Law, v. 12, 14, 15. and laying all the blame on the Carnality and Sinfulness of Man, as the only Reason why the Law alone could not reform him; but instead of relieving, left him still in a miserable condition, under the power and service of Sin, *the wages whereof is Death*: And the better and more fully to clear the goodness and spirituality, yea, and reasonableness of the Law, he shews how 'tis commonly approved even by them that break it, *their own Consciences accusing them* for their violations of it, v. 14, 15, 16. and to the greater Honour of the Divine Law, instances even in a Carnal Man (or Habitual Slave) *sold under sin*, v. 14. for of such a one it is true, that his Reason and Conscience doth not *allow the evil which he doth*, but on the contrary knows and confesses it to be evil, and so, tho' he breaks it, *consents to the Law, that it is good*, v. 16. which consent or acknowledgment of Conscience, in a Carnal Man, he calls, III. *The law of his Mind*, v. 23. which opposes the law of Sin, but is unable to overcome or free a Man from it. For till he be assisted and strengthened by the Grace and Spirit of Christ, the law of Sin which is in his Members, not only Warreth against the *law of his Mind*, but gets the Victory too, and leads him Captive into Sin.

The law of the Mind opposite to the law of Sin, but unable to overcome it, without the Grace of the Gospel;

Sin, so that he is still a Slave and Servant to it; v. 23. Now that the dictates of Conscience and natural Reason, or the inbred notions of Good and Evil common to all Men, should be called the *law of the Mind*, need not seem strange to him, who considers that they are seated in the Mind or Understanding, and are indeed a Law unto all Men, yea, the only Law to those Nations, to whom the written Law contained in the Scriptures was never yet revealed, and therefore for distinction sake is usually call'd *the law of Nature written in their Hearts*. And that this *law of the Mind*, opposing the *law of Sin*, should be found in unregenerate Men, is no more strange, than to see something of Reason and Conscience in them; 'tis in some measure common unto all Men, who have the use of Reason, not excepting Infidels and Heathens, who never received any external Laws from Heaven; for natural Conscience will in many instances dictate their Duty to them, and prompt them to perform it, accusing, convicting, and condemning them for their Sins, as besides the experience of the World, appears by those Heathens, who, as the Apostle tells us, *not having the Law (of Moses) were a law unto themselves, and shewed the work of the Law to be written in their Hearts, and their Consciences bearing witness (for, or against them) and their Thoughts accusing, or else excusing them for their Actions, as they were good or evil) Rom. 2. 14, 15.* Much more may be affirmed of such, who, besides the Law of Nature written in their Hearts, have their Consciences further enlightned with the Law of God written in their *Bibles*. They may make their boast of God (as the Author of their Religion) and know his Will (when revealed to them) yea, and approve the things that are more excellent, and yet refuse to practice them, as is manifest in the unbelieving Jews, *Rom. 2. 18, 23.* The Reason was given before in those words of the Apostle's, *Rom. 7. 23. The law in their Members* (the commanding power of fleshly Lusts, the strong propensity to Sin rooted in depraved Nature) *warreth against (i. e. opposes and resists) the law of their Minds, tho'*
D en;

enlightned with the Law of God, and approving of it too, and notwithstanding the knowledge and approbation of their Duty, carries them captive, and enslaves them to it self, still keeping them in subjection and bondage under Sin's accursed Empire, from which there is no deliverance or freedom but by the spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. Now, as long as a Man is under the law and power of Sin, he is, in the language of *St. Paul*, a *Servant* to it, in opposition to a *Servant* of God and Religion, *Rom. 6. 16, 22.* To know his Duty, to be convinced of it, to approve and consent unto it as good and fit to be done, is indeed a commendation of the Law, which requires it; but withal 'tis an evident accusation of the Person who doth it not, he plainly condemns himself in not doing that which he allows and confesses he ought to do, and so sins against his own Conscience, reproving and bearing witness to his folly. This then is no mark or sign of a regenerate Man, for Conscience may convince, accuse, condemn and disquiet an evil Man in his Sins; and yet being opposed by the Lusts of the Flesh, and Temptations of the World, be commonly overcome and unable to free him from the captivity and bondage of them; tho' he may see and confess his folly, he still continues to be a Fool, complaining of his Sins, and returning to them at the next opportunity, notwithstanding all the murmurings of his own Conscience against them. We see it dayly by sad experience, how some Men will not follow the course of Life, which they themselves approve and confess to be the best, they will commend Religion, plead for and admire it, and call themselves Fools for their vicious practices; but after all continue in them, and will not follow the dictates of their own Reason and Consciences, when oppos'd by their Lusts. Here's a War indeed between two opposite Principles within them, *i. e.* between the rational and carnal part, between the Mind and the Flesh, or between Conscience and Sinfulness; but whilst the Flesh prevails, and they walk after the Flesh, and obey it in the Lusts thereof, they are Slaves unto it, and under the

the Law of Sin and Death, from which the Apostle, when regenerate, was freed by the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. So that besides the *Law of Moses*, and the *Law of the Mind*, which were both overcome by the *Law of Sin*, and cannot of themselves deliver any Man from it, there is,

IV. Another *Law*, call'd by *St. Paul*, the *Law of the Life in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 2. This did the work which the others could not do, *v 3. i. e.* this effectually freed him from the Law both of Sin and Death. Now by the *Law of the Spirit of Life*, I conceive, is meant the *Gospel*, attended with the renewing Grace of the Spirit of Christ, which in regenerate Persons prevails over the contrary Lusts of the Flesh, and keeps them under, so that they do not Reign or bear Dominion; tho' therefore the regenerate carry Flesh about them, yet they do not walk after the *Flesh*, but after the *Spirit*, Rom. 8. 1. having through the *Spirit*, mortified the deeds of the *Body*, they do no longer live after the *Flesh* (in bondage and obedience to the Lusts thereof) Rom. 8. 13. that is, in the language of the *Gospel*, they are not *Servants unto Sin*; but being made free from *Sin*, are become the *Servants of Righteousness*, Rom. 6. 18. This is the Doctrine of *St. Paul*, this is his own description of regenerate Persons; by which it is apparent, that in them there is more than a bare strife and contention against *Sin*; which is common to evil Men, who yet suffer *Sin* to reign over them, and obey it in the Lusts thereof; for the regenerate are constantly describ'd by their Victory over *Sin*, and Freedom from its Service and Bondage; for which reason the *Gospel* is not unfitly stiled a *Law of Liberty*, because by it all good Christians are indeed set at Liberty from the Bondage and Captivity of *Sin*, and restored to the more gentle Government of God, whose Service is perfect freedom.

And now I hope I have prevented an Objection, which I foresaw from the beginning of this Discourse, concerning Christian Liberty from the Dominion of *Sin*; for by what hath been already said, it is manifest and plain, that *St. Paul* speak not of himself

The Law of the Spirit which effectually frees us from Sin.

St. Paul speaks not of himself as Regenerate, Rom. 7.

himself, as Regenerate, in the Seventh to the *Romans*, when he said, *I am carnal and sold under sin, v. 14. for the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do, v. 19. And I see another law in my Members warring against the law of my Mind, and bringing me in Captivity to the law of Sin, which is in my Members, v. 23.* For it hath been largely proved, that this Captivity and Law of Sin, was part of that Misery, from which the same Apostle presently declared himself to be made free by the Gospel, or *law of the Spirit life*: So that to fancy or imagine the former Expressions of *being carnal and sold under Sin, as a slave and captive to it, and of serving sin, v. 25. and doing the evil which in his Conscience he did not allow, v. 15, 19.* to be meant of *St. Paul*, when regenerate and made free from the law and service of Sin, is to suppose him to write manifest Contradictions, and to deny the Power of the Gospel and Grace of Christ, which he design'd to magnify and illustrate, by shewing its Efficacy in delivering him and all good Christians from the Dominion and Service of Sin; which neither the law of Nature, nor of *Moses* were able to do.

*In order to
prove this,
premise.*

But because all that I have said on the last particular concerning the necessity of freedom from the Law and Reign of Sin, will be to little purpose, unless this Objection from *St. Paul's* words in the Seventh to the *Romans* be fully answered; and because it is Common for the Slaves of Sin to mistake the Apostle, and think themselves regenerate, because their Consciences approve the good, which they do not, and disallow the evil, which they commonly practice, I shall embrace this as a fit occasion to demonstrate, that the Apostle doth not there describe, the state of a Regenerate Man, but the State of a Carnal Man, under the ineffectual Discipline of the *Mosaical Law*; convinced indeed of the goodness of the Law, and the Evil of Sin, but still going on in Sin against the Convictions of his own Conscience bearing Witness to his folly, which can by no means agree with the Character of a regenerate Person, given by *St. Paul* in the fore-

foregoing and following Chapters : But before I enter on the direct proof hereof, I shall premise a few things to take off all Prejudice and Misconstructions. And,

First, Let it be considered that I do not impertinently, or without just occasion, digress into this undertaking; for having discoursed somewhat largely of the part of Christian Liberty, which consists in freedom from the Reign, Dominion, and Service of Sin; and last of all shewed the necessity of it under the Gospel, this being the Character and Mark of a Regenerate Person or Child of God, by which he is distinguish'd from Hypocrites and Evil Men, I should leave this necessary subject very imperfect and unlikely to have any good effect, unless I answer such objections, as I may Reasonably presume, will be brought against it : And here, after serious Consideration of what may be objected, I openly and sincerely declare that the Texts formerly cited to prove this freedom from the Service and Dominion of sinful Lusts, to be a principal part of that Spiritual Liberty which is proclaim'd in the Gospel ; as also those which I added, to shew how this was commonly made the Character of a Child of God, whereby he is distinguish'd from a Slave of Sin, are all of them so clear and plain, that I know of nothing that can reasonably be objected against the foregoing Doctrine, but only the word of *St. Paul*, in the latter part of the Seventh Chapter to the *Romans*, where he says, *I am Carnal, and sold under Sin, for that which I do, I allow not, but that which I hate, that I do ; and how to perform that which is good, I find not, for the good that I would, I do not ; but the evil which I would not, that I do ; yea, I see a Law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of Sin, so that with the Flesh I serve the law of Sin*, v. 25. And the truth is, if these expressions be understood of *St. Paul* himself, when regenerate and converted unto Christ, i. e. if he still served the law of sin, as a captive to it, if he continued carnal, like a slave sold under sin, neglecting the good, which his own

1 That this is no impertinent Digression because what has been already said would be imperfect if this Objection were not answer'd.

Conscience told him he ought to do, and practicing the *evil*, which it told him he ought not to do: If I say, this was true of *St. Paul* after his Conversion to Christianity, then I confess a Man may be a captive to Sin, and a servant of it, and yet account himself a true Christian at the same time; and so all that hath been said for the necessity of freedom and deliverance from such a state will come to nothing: That therefore none either out of favour to his Lust, or out of Prejudice against an unwelcome Truth, may object the example of *St. Paul*, to evade the convincing evidence and force of the former Doctrine, I think my self oblig'd not to leave it, until I have vindicated those words of the Apostle from a too too common mistake. Yea,

2 The
wrong
sense
which
some put
upon this
Chapter
will justify
the Dis-
gression.

Secondly, Had I not so just an occasion, as 'tis manifest I have, yet considering the dangerous sense, which some put upon his words, and the evil use they make of them, when they are told of the necessity of leaving their beloved Sins, this alone might justify so good an attempt, on what occasion soever it were pursued. Evil Men will catch at any thing to maintain their Liberty in Sin (for so they usually call it, tho' the Scripture counts it *Servitude* and *Bondage*) Liberty from Sin is a Paradox which they will not understand; Sin they love, and to pursue it without molestation or disturbance, is the liberty they would have; reprove them for it, and you shall seldom find, but they have something, such as it is, to say by way of excuse, tho' their very excuses are often inexcusable and an aggravation of their Follies. I could name one who hath often made the Country to ring of his frequent Debaucheries and other attendant Crimes; who being lately told of them, reply'd, That he confess'd he had his failings, but allow'd them not; and tho' they were such failings, which might justly make any Man fear, least he fail of the *Grace of God* as the Apostle speaks, *Heb. 12. 15.* yet because he allow'd them not, he thought his condition safe, and seem'd to compare himself with *St. Paul*, in that expression of his, *Rom. 7. 15. What I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not;*

not ; but what I hate, that do I: A very fine excuse if there were no mistake, but it's too general to hold good ; for it will serve the turn of any Man be he never so Vicious, if he hath any thing of Conscience remaining in him : For let a Man consult his Conscience either before or after the commission of any known and confessed Sins, and I dare boldly say, it will not approve or allow them ; for Conscience must needs disallow whatever is consider'd and known to be sinful. If any justify and defend their Wickedness, 'tis because even their *Mind and Conscience is defiled*, Titus 1. 15. A blind-ed Conscience will not indeed disallow, that which it mistakes to be lawful, but in all Cases, wherein the evil committed appeareth to be evil ; every Mans Conscience, if it be consulted with, will both disapprove and condemn him for it. This then is no Argument at all of true Piety and Goodness, and yet how many flatter and deceive themselves with it: They suffer Sin to Reign over them, and obey it in the Lusts thereof ; yea, make provision for the Flesh, even seeking for opportunities to gratifie it's accursed Lusts, and when they have done, please themselves with this, that they acknowledge it to be Evil, and approve it not in their Minds, but can truly say, *That which I do, I allow not ; for what I would, that I do not ; but what I hate, that I do: If then I do that I would not, I consent unto the Law, that it is good ; now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, i. e. in my flesh dwelleth no good thing ; for to do evil is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not ; this I confess is my Case, but it is also the Case of St. Paul himself, and I cannot hope to be better than he, Why then should I trouble my self? This will always be my condition in this World, and there is no Remedy. Some tell us of freedom from the Law and Dominion of Sin, but a wiser than they confess'd, that, whilst with his mind he served the law of God, with the Flesh (he served) the law of sin, v. 25. and that he found a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the*

Law of Sin, vers. 23. and more cannot well be said of me; for at the worst, I can but be accounted a Captive and Servant unto Sin, and so I confess I am; but why should I think the worse of my self for that, when *St. Paul* the Blessed Vessel of Election acknowledged as much of himself? Here you see, is a very plausible pretence for continuance in any Sin or Sins, which a Man is addicted to, and it's as easy for any Man to make use of it, when he pleases, if he do but find any murmurs or complaints of Conscience, disallowing the evil, which he commits; and approving the good, which he neglects; So that to clear the meaning of the Apostle, and free his words from such dangerous abuses, must needs be a work of great concernment in Religion; for a mistake here may endanger a Man's eternal happiness. Accordingly *St. Austin* speaking of those words, *Rom. 7. 19.* gives a needful caution, "That whenever the words are read, we should
 " fear, lest the misunderstanding of them, should
 " Minister occasion of Sin, to them that seek it, for
 " Men are prone to Sin, and scarce restrain themselves; when therefore they here the Apostle
 " saying, *I do not the good, which I would; but the*
 " *evil which I would not, that I do; they do evil,*
 " and as it were, displeasing themselves; because
 " they do it, think themselves like the Apostle: So that Wise and Holy Man admonisheth us not without apparent Cause. But then,

3 Not easie to prevent Mens running into such mistakes.

3dly, How to prevent so gross a mistake of the Apostle's words, is no very easie task, not because there is any great difficulty in the Text, but because the true meaning of it is not so favourable to our Lusts, as some are apt to think it is; and because all Men will not consider the scope of the place, the occasion of the Words, and their coherence with what goes before and follows after; nor take the pains to compare them with other Texts, which make it manifest, that a Regenerate Man is never, in the language of the Scripture, accounted a Captive and Servant of Sin: As also because they do not diligently observe the peculiar Phrases of *St. Paul*, and the various Senses wherein he

he uses the word, *Law*; and the Wisdom of that Divine Orator in the management of his Controversy with his Countrymen the *Jews*, how he often starts and answers foreseen Objections, and sometimes to avoid offence, transfers such things unto himself, or his own Person, which are chiefly meant of others, who might not so well bear them, had they been deliver'd in plain and downright Language: All which things are diligently to be observed by him that will rightly understand *St. Paul* in the forementioned Chapter, as will appear in the following account thereof; so that careless Readers may easily be mistaken, neither will it be an easy matter to rectify and convince them of their mistakes, because they will not undergo the trouble of duely considering the Arguments, which should do it.

4^{thly}, Let me add, That the Interpretation, which I shall give of the place, is no private or singular Opinion of my own, but was generally received amongst the ancient and primitive Christians for Three Hundred years and more; for some that have had opportunity enough to do it, and have made it their business to search the Monuments of Antiquity on purpose to find some Authority to countenance their late Novel Opinion, can find but three or four at the most before *St. Austin's* time, (which was in the Fourth Century) who interpreted the forementioned words of *St. Paul* himself, when regenerate; and those few who did so, did, withal, limit their interpretation to the first motions of sin in the Fancy, or to evil Thoughts unconsented to, never charging the Holy Apostle with evil Actions committed against the express clamors of his own Conscience: So *Methodius* speaking of those words, *Rom. 7. 15.* expressly denies them to be meant of evil Practices; for *what I hate, that do I*, is to be understood (saith he) not of *Doing that which is evil, but of Thinking and Desiring only*; for we cannot hinder Thoughts from coming upon us, but we can chuse whether we will be perswaded by them, or make use of them. So likewise *St. Austin* interpreting those other words,

Rom.

4 The Interpretation here given, is that which was receiv'd in the Three First Centuries.

Rom. 7. 25. *With the Mind I serve the Law of God, with the Flesh the Law of Sin*, tells us, they are thus to be understood, *with the Mind I serve the Law of God*, by refusing to consent to the *Law of Sin*; and *with the Flesh I serve the Law of Sin*, in that I have sinful desires in me; tho' I do not consent unto them. So that according to him, with the *Flesh* to serve the *Law of Sin*, is only to desire that which is evil; and on the otherside, with the *Mind* to serve the *Law of God*, is to deny all consent to such sinful desires; and this was after his Judgment was changed, and he began to interpret the place of *St. Paul's* own Person, when Regenerate. Say not (saith he in another place) that we invite Men (*ad dulcia facta, &c.*) to evil Actions that are pleasing to *Flesh* and *Blood*, when we repeat the words of the Apostle, saying, *I know that in me, i.e. in my Flesh dwelleth no good thing*; for tho' they perform not the Good which they desire, so perfectly, as to be free from all evil desires; yet they do good so far, as to check those evil desires, and refuse to follow them. As for the other words, *Chap. 7. 15. What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do*; If we understand them of *St. Paul* himself, we cannot, without an intolerable abuse of that Holy Apostle, imagine that he meant, that he would have been Honest, and yet Defrauded his Brethren; or that he would have been Sober, yet was a Drunkard; or that he would have been Charitable, and yet was Malicious: Or as our Country man *Beda* observed almost a Thousand years ago, we must not so understand the Apostle, as if he said, that he would have been Chast, and yet was an Adulterer; or that he would have been Merciful, and yet was Cruel; or that he would have been Pious, and yet was Impious; but that he would not so much as desire what was evil, tho' he was sometimes troubled with such desires against his will. This being the Interpretation of those few amongst the Ancients, who conceived *St. Paul* to spake of himself when Regenerate, it will, I think, be a hard task to find any one single Person among all those famous Lights and Ornaments

ments of the Christian Church, who interpreted *St. Paul* in the 7th to the *Romans*, so, as to accuse the Holy Apostle, or to make him accuse himself of deliberate and chosen Sins, committed against the exprefs dictates of his Conscience, after his Conversion to Christianity. So that they who interpret his words otherwise, that they may abuse his Example to comfort themselves or others in any unchristian Practices, must do it, not only against Reason, but without any countenance of Authority from the ancient Champions of the Truth: For tho' some of them, as *St. Austin* and *St. Jerome* by Name, in their Disputations against the *Pelagian* Heresy, deserted the common, and that which was once their own Interpretation of *St. Paul's* words, thinking it more serviceable to their purpose, to interpret them of *St. Paul* himself when regenerate, rather than of a Carnal Jew: Yet they so limited that Interpretation, as to lay no slander on the Apostle, and to give no occasion to any Man to do evil Deeds, or utter evil Words, or so much as to cherish or consent to evil Thoughts, out of a pretence that he had *St. Paul* for his Example: For they interpreted his complaint, of evil desires only, or inward lusting after forbidden things, without so much as indulgence or consent unto them. Which Interpretation, tho' Innocent and Pious, without harm or danger in it, yet being alien from the Apostle's scope, and unsuitable to his expressions, hath not had very many Abettors: How hardly it can agree with the Apostle's Design, will hereafter appear; and how unsuitable it is unto his Expressions, will be manifest to him, who shall consider, that, *to do evil*, is something more than to desire it; and that *to be carnal and sold under Sin, to be carried captive into the law of Sin, and to serve it*; are expressions so fit and proper, to signify and exprefs the sad condition of a Person, who is indeed a *Servant of Sin*, under its reign and dominion, as the same Apostle speaks in the former Chapter, that in all reason they ought to be understood in the same sense; it being incredible that the same Apostle, in one and the same Discourse, should use them
in

in different senses, without any the least occasion so to do. He that can give a sufficient reason, why the Phrase, to *serve the law of Sin*, Rom. 7. *last*, should not signify the same as to *serve Sin*, and to *be a Servant of Sin*, Rom. 6. 6, 20. Or why, the other expressions, to *be sold under sin*, and to *do evil*, Chap. 7. 14, 19. should not signify as much as to *be under the reign of Sin*, and *obey it in the lusts thereof*, Chap. 6. 12. or why to *be brought into captivity to the law of Sin, which is in the Members*, Chap. 7. 23. should not be as much as to *suffer sin to have dominion*, and to *yield the Members servants to it*, Chap. 6. 14, 19. He (I say) that can give a good and satisfactory reason, why these parallel expressions should not express the same state of subjection and servitude under the prevailing power of unmortified Lusts; Or why those expressions, *Ch. 7.* which are equally significant of an unregenerate state, as the other in the 6th should not signify the same, will do more (I believe) than hath ever yet been done; and in doing of it, must needs fall into this inconveniency, *viz.* to make St. Paul differ from himself, from Christ, the other Apostles and Sacred Writers, with whom to *be a servant of Sin*, and in *bondage to Corruption*, to *commit sin* and to *serve it*, and to *be sold under sin as a slave unto it*, is manifestly the description of a state of mortal sin and unregeneration, *John* 8. 34. *1 John* 3. 8, 9. *2 Pet.* 2. 19. *Rom.* 6. 6, 20. *1 Kings* 21. 20. And the truth is, they who apply those expressions, *Chap. 7.* to St. Paul himself when regenerate, do not scruple to confess, that, — *per totum caput ejusmodi locutiones usurpantur, quæ alibi non inveniuntur in eodem sensu*: The Apostle throughout the whole Chapter useth such expressions, which are no where else to be found in the same sense, wherein he there useth them: Which is plainly to acknowledge, that they who expound the Chapter, of St. Paul himself, when regenerate, do it without any Authority from any other Text of Scripture. To justify the Exposition,

Tombs
against
Bull, p. 43.

There.

Therefore, *Fifthly* and *lastly*, to come to an issue, and shew the true meaning of the Apostle in the Chapter, we need not be afraid to close with the Ancient and Primitive Interpretation, which apply'd those expressions of *being carnal and sold under sin, and being led captive into the law of sin*, so as to serve it, Chap. 7. 14, 23, 25. not to St. Paul when Regenerate and made free from the law of sin, by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, Chap. 8. 2. but to Paul Unregenerate, and representing the Person and State of a Carnal Jew, under the weaker Discipline of the *Mosaick Law*, when they were in the *Flesh* and the motions of *Sin*, which were by the Law, wrought in their Members, to bring forth fruit unto Death, as the Apostle expressly declares, Rom. 7. 5. Which words are the occasion of the Objection, v. 7. the Answer whereunto takes up all the rest of the Chapter; which therefore cannot so reasonably be interpreted of St. Paul, Apostle and Christian, Regenerate by the Grace of the Gospel, as of that Carnal state of a Jew under the Ministration and Pædagogical of the Law, which was evidently the Subject of the Apostle's discourse. But of this more largely, when I come more closely to vindicate this plain and primitive Interpretation. For this one Argument, from the Subject of St. Paul's Discourse, is to me a demonstration, that the words in question are a description of the Miserable state of a Carnal Jew, under the Dominion and Guilt of Sin, notwithstanding the Law of Moses; and not of a Regenerate Christian, made free from both, by the Spirit and Grace of Christ vouchsafed in the Gospel.

Were it needful to heap up Authority to Countenance this Exposition, it were very easie to give you good *measure, heaped up, press'd down, shaken together, and running over*, as our Saviour speaks in another Case, Luke 9. 38. for this is done to my hands by several Learned Men, who have endeavour'd to retrieve that Ancient Piety which once flourish'd in the Church, and to extirpate that Licentiousness and Presumption, which they justly fear'd to have been encreas'd by some Erroneous Doctrines,

Doctrines, that evidently encouraged an Evil Life, and such they thought this to be, which makes a Regenerate Person, yea, an eminent Christian and Apostle of Christ, to continue Carnal and sold under Sin, a captive and servant to it, doing that *evil* which his own Conscience disallowed, and not finding to perform that *which was good* : For if this be any part of the Description of a Child of God, it would be a hard task to convince any Man of the danger of his Sins, who had Common Reason to discern between Good and Evil ; for such a one might say, *That which I do, I allow not ; for what I would, that do I not ; but what I hate, that do I : if then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good ;* whereupon he would be apt enough to infer, *now then it is no more I that do it, but Sin that dwelleth in me ;* for so it follows, v. 17. Which consideration hath put many Pious and Learned Men upon the enquiry, what was the true meaning and purpose of the Apostle in that place ; and to this end, besides all other Rules for interpreting of the Scriptures, to search into the Eldest Monuments of the Church, to see the Judgment of the Ancients, who lived nearest the Apostle's days, and so far as I (who have not been a little inquisitive in the Case) can find, there was never any one of them produced, who interpreted the words in question, so as to charge St. Paul, when an Apostle and Preacher of Righteousness, with sinful Actions, deliberately committed against the Dictates of his own Conscience, against his own Profession at other times ; for excepting those few, who, especially about the Fourth Century, limited his harshest expressions to evil Thoughts unconsented to, the Ancients unanimously apply'd them to a State of Nature and Unregeneration before Conversion to Christianity ; and some have produc'd above Twenty of them speaking to that purpose.

Vide Bull
Apol.

In this Interpretation they have been follow'd by many in our own and former Ages, tho' with a little difference. Some supposing St. Paul to represent the Person of a Man in the state of Nature, without

without the Law of *Moses*; and of a *Jew* under the Law; and of a Christian under the Gospel; all in that one Chapter. Of the first, they interpret, *v. 9.* where 'tis said, *I was once alive without the law*: and of the Second, they understood all that follows to the explanation, *v. 24.* where he declares the wretchedness of the former state of Carnality under the Law, and then giveth thanks to God for deliverance from it through Jesus Christ. *O wretched Man that I am, &c.* which Thanksgiving must needs be spoken in the Person of a Christian; others granting this, as that which no Reason can deny, conceive the Apostle in the foregoing Verses, to personate and represent only the State of a Carnal *Jew*, convinced indeed by the law, of his Duty unto God, and of the Divine Wrath and Vengeance due unto his Sins, but not enabled by the Law, either to perform the Good that is required, or to eschew the Evil which it forbid. Accordingly they interpret what is said, *v. 9.* of being *alive without the law once*, " of one whose
 " Conscience is not yet considerably awakened to
 " any Sense of his Duty, or Discrimination of
 " Good and Evil; one who Sins freely without
 " check or controul, or disquieting remorse of
 " Conscience: Which seems the most probable account of these words. But notwithstanding this inconsiderable difference about one Verse, both sides agree in this, That to be *carnal and sold under sin, to be led captive to the law of sin, and to serve in it, in doing evil, and not performing that which was good*, is not to be understood of the Holy Apostle himself, when a regenerate Christian, made free from that law of Sin by *the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*; but in the Wretched State of a Carnal *Jew*, under conviction of the Goodness of the Law, and Evil of Sin, but still going on in his Sins against the inward Clamors of his own Conscience. And in defence of this plain and obvious exposition, I might produce a great number of Modern as well as Ancient Expositors; but I shall not insist on great Names and Authorities of Men, (tho' these are by no means to be despised) but I shall

shall rather insist on Arguments taken from *St. Paul* himself in that discourse, and other Texts of Scripture, which unquestionably describe the state both of Regenerate and Unregenerate Men, and tell us the difference between them.

That
St. Paul
speaks not
of himself
as regenerate;
Prov'd.

Among several Arguments that may very properly be urged to prove that *St. Paul* in the Seventh to the *Romans*, did not affirm *himself to be Carnal and sold under Sin, or to continue a Captive and Servant unto the Law of Sin* after his Conversion, and at the same time when he *was made free from it by the Law of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*, I shall at present mention only Two:

The First shall be taken from the general Design and Scope of the Chapter.

The Second from the particular Occasion of the Words in Question.

I From
the general
design
and scope
of the
Chapter.

1st, Let it be observ'd that the general Design and Scope of this Chapter, is the design likewise of the 6th and 8th; for we must of necessity give such an interpretation of the Apostle's words, as may be consistent with his main design in the **Place**, and not at all contradict or cross the intent and purpose for which they were written: Now the better to perceive and understand the general drift and scope of those Three Chapters, so far as they concern the present question, we must look back into that which goes before; which if we do, we shall find, that there is a very close Connexion in the Apostle's discourse, the 6th, 7th, and 8th, Chapters, being occasion'd by what was said in the former: For in the Third Chapter, the Apostle largely proves, *That no man could be justified in the sight of God by the merit of his own performances; or upon terms either of the Law of Nature or of Moses. So that all must needs have recourse to the Mercy, Favour and free Grace of God, through the Redemption which is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his Blood,* Rom. 3. 24, 25. In the Fourth Chapter, he prosecutes the same Doctrine; further confirming it by the example of *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, and shewing how he was justified the same way; and

in

in the Fifth Chapter, goes to the very bottom of the Question, making it appear that no mere Child of *Adam* was ever justify'd otherwise, since the Fall in Paradise; the Wisdom of God having so order'd the matter, that the manner of our Restauration by Christ, should answer to the manner of our Fall by *Adam*. To this purpose he makes the comparison between the first and second *Adam*, v. 12, &c. to shew, that as the one was the Fountain of Sin and Death; so the other was the Fountain of Righteousness and Life, tho' the Comparison was in other respects unequal; because the Grace of God in Christ, exceeded the Condemnation for Sin in *Adam*, as he shews, v. 15, 16, 17. Yet in this there was a plain Similitude and Agreement; That as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all Men to condemnation, even so by the Righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all Men to justification of life, v. 18. i. e. As for the Sin of *Adam*, both he and his Posterity were all sentenc'd to Death; so for the sake of Christ and his Obedience, there is now a general, tho' conditional Grant or Promise of Pardon and Eternal Life. Which Doctrine as it gave hopes of Mercy to the very Gentiles upon their Repentance and Faith in Christ, so it directly crossed the *Jews* conceit of justification by the Law of *Moses*. And therefore because they would be apt to object, If these things be so, if no Man can be justified by the deeds of the Law, if all are under a sentence of Condemnation upon account of *Adam's* Sin, besides many others of their own, and cannot be justified or pardoned but by the free Grace of God, vouchsafed in Consideration of the Obedience of Christ; to what purpose then was the Law given to our Fathers from Mount *Sinai*? The Apostle Answers, and further shews them the use and effect of the Law, v. 20. moreover the law enter'd (said he) that the offence might abound, i. e. in Pravity and Guilt, but not by Multiplication of its Acts; for the Law was not given for Men to break it, and so to Augment the number of their Sins; but to convince them more clearly of their Duty, and the heinousness of their Transgressions, and so to keep them in Obedience. So the same Apostle elsewhere tells us, *That the law*

E was

was added (to the promise) *because of Transgression*, Gal. 3. 19. That is, as was shewn before, to curb and restrain Men from Sin, by discovering it more plainly to them, and expressly declaring the Wrath and Curse of God against it ; but thro' the sinfulness of Men, prevailing against the Prohibitions and Threatnings of the Law, it came to pass that Sin did indeed abound, or rather was encreas'd in its Criminousness and Guilt by the Law, that is, every Fault was aggravated, every Sin became the greater and more inexcusably sinful, being against an express promulgate Law, which took away the pretence of Ignorance ; but then (saith the Apostle) *where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*, as it follows, Rom. 5. 20. that is, The Mercy of God was indeed the greater and more illustrious to the *Jews*, in sending the Gospel first unto them, and sending them a Pardon through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, when *their Sins* were in this respect more Odious and Inexcusable than the Sins of *other Nations* ; because committed against an express and promulgate Law, revealed to them from Heaven, when others had little besides the weak and glimmering light of Nature to acquaint them with their Duty. Which Doctrine concerning the abundance or excess of Grace, illustrated by the Law, which aggravated and enhanced their Sins, was against all Reason disrelisht by the *Jews*, especially the Pharisaical Party among them ; *who rested in the law for justification, and trusted in themselves that they were Righteous*, Rom. 2. 17. Luke 18. 9. therefore they endeavoured to render this Doctrine as Odious as they could, and were wont to say, if this be true, that the *law entered, that sin might abound, and where sin abounded by encrease of Guilt ; Grace hath much more abounded*, in offering Pardon of Sins thus aggravated and enhanced : Then we need not fear or scruple to live as we please, and to go on in Sin, that Grace may yet the more abound. This Malicious but Foolish objection the Apostle takes in hand, and largely answers Chap. 6. where he first proposes the Objection, and then rejects it by way of Abomination,

nation, v. 1, 2. *What shall we say then? Shall or do we say, as some would have us? Let us continue in Sin that Grace may abound? God forbid.* As if he had said far be it from us so to teach or think; this is no part of our Doctrine, nor any Consequence of it. All that was said concerning the abundance of Grace, being spoken with respect to the Pardon of former Sins, before Conversion unto Christ, and to be understood with the suppos'd condition of Repentance and Reformation for the time to come. For our very Baptism, wherein we took upon us the Name of Christ, is an avowed *Death to Sin*; so that our Christian Profession most strictly obliges us *not to live any longer therein*. So the Apostle goes on to the end of the Chapter, shewing not only the obligations and duty, but the necessity also which lay on all Christians to relinquish the Service of Sin, and to approve themselves the Servants of God and Righteousness, and that upon Peril of Eternal Death; and therefore *Calvin* (in v. 1 and 2.) well observ'd, the Apostle in that whole Chapter declares, how wrongfully those Men divide Christ and his Benefits, who Dream of Justification by his Grace without a new and holy Life: "For Christ, *says he*, doth not wash us
 " from the Guilt of our Sins by his Blood, and by
 " his expiation of them, procure the favour of
 " God unto us, but when he makes us partakers of
 " his Spirit, which renews us to a Holy Life; it
 " is therefore a more than Preposterous Inversion
 " of the work of God, to make his Grace, offer'd
 " to us in Christ, an occasion or encouragement to
 " Sin, for the Remedy cannot be thought to che-
 " rish the Disease, which it was design'd to Cure.

But to come more close unto my business, 'tis observable, that *Romans Six Fourteen*, The Apostle retorts his Adversaries Common Argument against themselves: For whereas the *Jews* fasly inferred an odious licentious liberty to Sin, from his former Doctrine, concerning the necessity and freeness of Gospel Grace, and the impossibility of the Justification by the Law of Works, he on the contrary tells his Brethren,

that believed, *That Sin should not have Dominion over them, for this very Reason; because they were not under the Law, but under Grace.* That which some Misconstrued as an encouragement to continue in Sin, v. 1. he makes an Argument and encouragement to cast off its Reign, Service and Dominion, as plainly appears by that and the Two foregoing Verses; for tho' some with the *Jews* catch at the last words, *ye are not under the law, but under grace*, and thence infer a liberty in Sin, which Christ never granted, not considering what goes before, and how those words are brought in, as a Reason and Argument against the Reign, Service, and Dominion of Sin, spoken of immediately before; for so runs the Context, *Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof, neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto Sin, &c. for sin shall not have dominion over you, for (that is, for this Reason, because) ye are not under the law, but under grace.* Where the better to understand the strength and force of the Apostle's Argument, we must observe, that in those words, the *Law* is evidently oppos'd unto *Grace*, and therefore must needs signify the *law* alone, elsewhere called *the ministry of the letter and of death*; in opposition to the *ministration of the spirit that giveth life*, 2 Cor. 3. 6, 8. Now the *Law* in this sense is consider'd as given by *Moses*, without the *grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ*, i. e. the *Mosaical Law* as it stands in opposition to the *Gospel*, tho' it strictly forbid Sin, and threatned Punishment for it, and so might in some measure restrain it, not suffering Sin to keep an uncontrouled Dominion in the Soul, Gal. 3. 19. yet considered in this Notion, it neither afforded inward *Grace* to subdue and mortify Sin, nor promised any true and perfect Pardon, without which, there is no encouragement to forsake it. But under the *Grace* of the *Gospel*, the Case is quite otherwise; for Sin is forbidden, and Sinners threatned too as much, yea, and more severely than in the law of *Moses*; yet there is Pardon offer'd upon Repentance and Amendment of Life, with inward *Grace* and
Strength

Strength to enable us so to do ; both which are mighty encouragements to renounce the Dominion and Service of Sin, and give up our selves in Obedience unto God. This is the Happiness and Advantage of being under Grace, that we have greater assistance, and greater motives and encouragements to cast off the Yoke of Sin, and to leave its service, than the *Jews* had under the Weak and Ineffectual Discipline of the Law of *Moses*. And this is that which the Apostle Prosecutes in the Seventh Chapter ; for the rest of the Sixth Chapter being spent in answer to an Objection, v. 15. he returns to his Argument in the 7th, the better to win over his Brethren the *Jews* from the Law to the Gospel ; from *Moses* to *Christ* ; from *Judaism* to *Christianity* ; from the Ministry of the Letter, to the Ministration of the Spirit : That being assisted by the Spirit of Christ, they might bring forth fruit unto God, and serve him in newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, Chap. 7. 4, 6. And withal to shew, how far the Grace of the Gospel was, from encouraging any Man to continue in Sin : For having in answer to that Objection, told them in the former Chapter, *That sin should not have dominion over them, because they were not under the law, but under grace* : Least any should misconstrue his Words, he seasonably explains himself in the Seventh Chapter, shewing in the Four first Verses, how the Believing *Jews*, were, by the Death of Christ, freed from the Law, i. e. from the *Mosaical* Dispensation of it ; or from the old Covenant, which was now at an end, and no longer in force ; Even as a Woman is freed from the Bond of Marriage when her Husband is Dead : And as she is then at liberty to be Married to another Man, so now the old Covenant of the Law being expired, they were freed from it ; so that they might, and ought to be joyn'd unto Christ, that they might bring forth fruit unto God, that is, that they might bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, or the fruits of Righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the Praise and Glory of God, Phil. 1. 11. compared to Gal. 5. 22. Which Words being the Reason why

they were deliver'd from the old Covenant of the Law, do plainly imply, that when they formerly lived under it, they were barren and unfruitful in that which was good, and brought forth little or no fruit, but the bitter Fruit of Sin and Death: And so it expressly follows, v. 7, 8. for when we were in the Flesh, that is, in our former Carnal State, under the weak and unefficacious Discipline of the Law, the motions of Sin, which were by the Law, wrought in our Members, to bring forth fruit unto Death; but now says the Apostle in the next Verse, *We are delivered from the Law, That being Dead, wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*: Where he again repeats the Reason, why they were delivered from the Old Covenant, or Mosaical Administration of the Law; which was not to leave them Lawless, or exempt them from the Service of God; but to bring them under a better Covenant, a more powerful and efficacious Dispensation of Grace, that they might serve God in a better manner, by performing that new and spiritual Obedience required in the Gospel. Now lest he might seem to have laid any blame on the Law, in what he had said, v. 5. he proposes a foreseen Objection, v. 7. *What shall we say then? Is the law Sin? or the cause of it? God forbid.* And in answer to the Objection, and another thence arising, he spends all the rest of the Chapter in vindicating the Law, excusing that from being of it self any proper cause either of Sin or Death, and laying all the blame on the Carnality and Sinfulness of Men, as the only Reason why the Law alone could not reform them; but instead of relieving, left them still in a miserable condition under the Power and Dominion of Sin, *The Wages whereof is Death*, as was once intimated before, and shall more fully be shewn hereafter.

Having finished the Digression occasion'd by the Objection, v. 7. the Apostle in the beginning of the Eighth Chapter returns to his Principal Subject, shewing how all true Christians were by the Grace and Spirit of Christ under the Gospel, freed both from

from the Guilt and Dominion of Sin. Neither of which the Law of *Moses* was able to do, v. 1, 2, 3, 4. which tho' it may seem to differ from what has been said before, concerning deliverance from the Law, is in effect the same ; for they, who by the Mercy of God in Christ, are freed from the Guilt of Sin, *i. e.* from the Obligation unto Death, arising from the threatning of the Law, are thereby freed from the Condemnation of it. And being by the Spirit of Christ under the Gospel, freed from the Reign and Dominion of Sin, it's manifest also that they are delivered from the Law, consider'd under the Mosaical Dispensation, when it could not mortifie or subdue the motions of Sin, or hinder them from proceeding unto Act, *Rom.* 7. 5. So that in the Eighth Chapter, in the former part of it, the Apostle prosecutes the same Subject, which he began in the Sixth, when he told the Believing *Jews*, *That sin should not have dominion over them, because they were not under the law, but under grace*, and which he pursues in the Seventh Chapter, from v. 1. to v. 6. wherein he comprises the Sense of the other in a few words, telling them, *That they were deliver'd from the law, that they might serve* (that is, serve God who delivered them) *in newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.* Where the *Oldness of the letter* seems to signify Two Things :

First, The old way of Ceremonial Worship under the Mosaick Covenant, without the inward and spiritual Purity signified by it ; for thus *Circumcision in the letter* is oppos'd to *Circumcision of the heart, in the spirit*, *Rom.* 2. 29. The one signifying the literal outward Circumcision in the Flesh, the other signifying spiritual and inward Purity of Heart.

Secondly, *To serve in the oldness of the letter*, may signifie also the former Obedience even to the Moral Law, under the old Covenant, considered as a law, letter, or writing only ; without the Spirit enabling us to obey it. For thus the Ministry of the old Covenant is call'd the *Ministry of the letter*, and stands oppos'd to the *Ministry of the Gos-*

pel, or new Covenant, called the *Ministry of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8. because the Grace and Gifts of the Spirit of God were joyn'd with it, and not with the old Covenant of the Law; therefore the Apostle thus bespeaks the *Galatians* who doted in the Law, *receiv'd ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of Faith?* and again, *he that ministreth unto you the Spirit, and worketh Miracles among you, doth he it by the work of the Law, or the hearing of Faith?* Gal. 3. 2, 5. Thus the Law, Rom. 7. is used by St. Paul, in the Jewish Sense, for the Law, as given by Moses, without the Spirit of Christ assisting and enabling us to obey it: And to the Law in this notion of it, he opposes the Gospel of Christ, shewing the weakness of the one, and the power of the other, to destroy the Reign and Dominion of Sin, and free us from its Guilt, which was one Reason of the *Abolishment of the old Covenant by the death of Christ, and the bringing in of the Gospel, or better Covenant, for the advancement of new and spiritual Obedience*, Chap. 7. 4, 6. A work which the Law alone was insufficient and unable to effect, v. 5.

And now let Common Reason Judge, whether it be likely that the Apostle should speak of himself as Regenerate by the Grace of Christ, in that Description of the prevalency of Sin from the Fourteenth Verse to the end of the Chapter? where the state of the Person describ'd, was such as justly denominated him *Carnal and sold under sin, yea, a Captive and servant to it*, neither finding how to perform that which was good, nor to avoid the evil which his own conscience disallow'd. Can we think that in the midst of a Discourse, design'd to shew the weakness of the Law, and the Power of the Gospel, to reform the *lives and hearts* of Men, he should speak thus of himself when freed from the *law of sin, by the law of the spirit of life*, Chap. 8. 2? This were to make him contradict his own Design, and disparage the Grace of the Gospel, and make it, in this particular, as ineffectual as the Law, when his purpose was to prove the contrary; for 'tis plain that the scope and design of the Chapter, was

was to shew, that the state of Men under the Discipline of the Law, was a State of Carnality and Nature, which tho' well instructed, could not be cured by the Law ; and that they were for that Reason deliver'd from the Law in the *Jewish* notion of it, and brought under a far more Powerful Dispensation of Grace by the Gospel, that they might bring forth fruit unto God, and serve him in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the Letter, v. 4, 6. if therefore we must suppose that which follows concerning the power and prevalence, the captivity and servitude of Sin, to be meant of a Regenerate Christian, renew'd by the Grace of Christ, we must suppose the Apostle, not only to forget his subject, but to contradict his evident design, in the Six first Verses of the Chapter, as also in that which goes before, and that which follows after, and to make the mighty Grace of the Gospel, no more effectual to subdue the Dominion of Sin, than the inefficacious Discipline of the Law; the quite contrary whereunto, was manifestly his purpose and design, both in that and the Two encompassing Chapters.

And thus I have finish'd the First Argument, on which I have been somewhat long, and perhaps, tedious too ; but the clearing of the Apostle's design is so serviceable and necessary, for the right understanding his meaning of several Texts in those Three Chapters, and particularly in those in question, that I should have wrong'd a good Cause should I have pass'd it over negligently : For the Truth is, this one Argument from the general design and scope of St. Paul in that place, is of it self enough to satisfy any diligent and considering Reader, That he did not affirm himself to be carnal and sold under sin, that is, a slave and captive under the law and dominion of Sin, at the same time, when he was freed from it by the Gospel, or law of the spirit of life, Rom. 8. 2. For his purpose and business in the former part of the Seventh Chapter, was to shew his Brethren the Believing Jews, v. 1. That they were deliver'd from the old Covenant, and brought under a better ;
under

under a more powerful Dispensation of Grace by Christ and his Gospel, by reason of the weakness and inability of the First, and the strength and power of the Other, to rescue and deliver them; either from the Reign and Dominion, or from its Guilt and Condemnation due to Sinners. This in general is manifestly the Apostle's scope, in pursuance whereof, he particularly shews,

First, The power and prevalence of Mens Natural Corruption, strengthened and encreas'd by custom in Sin.

Secondly, The insufficiency of the Law of *Moses* (consider'd merely as a Law) to suppress and mortify their fleshly Lusts, or to remove the Guilt contain'd by Reason of them.

Thirdly, The power and efficacy of the Gospel to do both, namely, to renew and sanctify their Natures, and so to prepare and fit them for Pardon and Acceptance with God, according to his Gracious Promises through the Propitiation made by Christ.

Fourthly, That for these Reasons, that is, because of the weakness and insufficiency of the Law on one hand, and of the power and efficacy of the Gospel on the other, to produce these needful effects, The first Covenant of the Law was abolished, and the new Covenant of the Gospel establish'd in its stead, that we might *bring forth fruit unto God, and serve him in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*

Now in order to the Second of these particulars, that is, the better to shew the weakness and insufficiency of the *Jewish* Law to destroy the Dominion or Guilt of Sin, or to produce true Sanctification and Pardon, it was indeed very proper, to set forth the Carnality, Sinfulness, and Misery of a Person under that Dispensation alone, before his deliverance by the Grace of Christ in the Gospel; but to apply the same to a Regenerate Person, when freed from the sad condition, by the Grace of God in Christ, is plainly to make the Apostle contradict the other part of his evident design, which was to shew the efficacy and power of the Gospel,

Gospel, to do that, which the Law it self could never do, Chap. 8. 3. that is, to free and deliver us from the Reign and Dominion, as well as from Guilt and Condemnation for Sin, that we might *bring forth fruit unto God, and serve him in newness of spirit.* For what can possibly be more contradictory to this intent and purpose, than to make a Regenerate Christian still to continue a Carnal Slave, and Captive to the law or dominion of sin, neither doing the Good which his Conscience approves and tells him he ought to do; nor eschewing the evil which Conscience startles at, and tells him he ought not to do? Certainly this is not the way to prove the power and efficacy of the Grace of Christ under the Gospel, to free us from the Captivity and Slavery of Sin, which was a principal part of the Apostle's design.

Secondly, The next Argument to prove that ^{2 From} St. Paul in the Seventh to the Romans, did not ^{the parti-} affirm himself to *be carnal and sold under sin, and* ^{cular oc-} *to continue a captive and servant to the Law of sin* ^{casion of} after his Conversion, when he was made free from ^{the Words} it by the *law of the spirit of life,* shall be taken ^{in questi-} from the particular occasion of the words in ^{on.} question. We have already seen how contrary that interpretation is to his general design and scope, in that, and the encompassing Chapters; let us now Reflect upon the particular occasion of the Words, and we shall find it equally as impertinent to this, as unto the other; for it is manifest, that the whole Discourse, from the Seventh Verse to the end of the Chapter (excepting one Parenthesis, v. 25) was intended for an Answer unto Two Objections, occasion'd by what was said immediately before, concerning the motions of Sin which were by the Law, and their working in them that lived under it, to *bring forth fruit unto death,* as also their consequent deliverance from the Law, that they might *serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter,* v. 5, 6. For that he might not seem in these words to lay the fault and blame on the Law, by making it the cause of Sin and Death, and so give the more offence

offence unto the *Jews*, the Apostle starts a foreseen Objection, *v. 7. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid.* And then in Vindication of the Law, or to clear it from any unjust Charge, he proceeds unto the Twelfth Verse; where having shewed in the foregoing Verses, that it was not the Law of God, but Sin, or rather the Sinfulness of Men, which was the Original, or most proper Cause of their Guilt and Misery, he very rationally concludes, that notwithstanding any thing he said, *The Law is Holy, and the Commandment Holy, Just and Good*; upon which conclusion of his Answer to the former Objection, he immediately raises another, *v. 13. Was, that then which is good, made death unto me?* That is, was the Law, which is acknowledged and proved to be Good, the cause of Evil and Misery to me? Or, is the blame to be charged on the Law, that I being guilty of Sin, am liable and obnoxious unto Death its declar'd Penalty? *God forbid*, says the Apostle again, by way of Indignation against such an Inference. It was not the Law, but Sin, *says he*, that was the Cause of this my Misery; and which, by this means, appear'd to be Sin in its proper Colours, that is, *exceeding Sinful, working death in, or rather to me, even by the law which is good.* And so he goes on again to the end of the Chapter in answer to this Second Objection, shewing the Goodness and Spirituality of the Law on the one hand, and the Sinfulness and Carnality of Men on the other; *for we know that the law is Spiritual, but I am carnal and sold under Sin, v. 14.* of which, that which follows is a farther Confirmation and proof, as appears by the Rational Particle *for* in the beginning of *v. 15.*

This account of the Coherence and Occasion of the whole Discourse is very plain, and will, I doubt not, be Manifest to any intelligent Person, who diligently views the Chapter. And from hence, I thus argue, That since all that is said from the Seventh Verse to the end of the Chapter, in answer to the foreseen Objections occasion'd by the Fifth Verse, does manifestly depend upon it; and since the Apostle

postle in the Fifth Verse, doth expressly speak of the Carnal State of the *Jews* under the Law of *Moses*, when they were in the Flesh, *and the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in their members to bring forth fruit unto death*, with what colour of Reason, can any one interpret that which follows and depends upon it, of any other state of Men, besides that which gave occasion to the whole Discourse? that is, since what is said in Answer to the former Objections depends upon them, and the Objections themselves were occasion'd, by what was affirmed of the Carnal *Jews*, when they were in the Flesh, under the Mosaical Dispensation of the Law; How can we possibly understand it of a Regenerate Christian, renewed by the Grace of Christ under the Gospel? 'Tis I am sure a good way of interpreting Scripture, to take notice of the occasion of words in question, and observe their coherence with, and dependance on it; which if we do, we shall easily perceive, that those expressions of being Carnal and sold under Sin, are to be understood not of a Regenerate Christian, when sanctified and made free *from the law and dominion of sin*, but of a Carnal *Jew*, when he was in the Flesh, and the motions of Sin prevailed to *bring forth fruit unto death*, as 'tis affirmed, *v. 5.* whence the Objection which occasion'd the following discourse takes its Rise.

Hitherto all agree, that the Apostle speak in the Person of a Carnal *Jew*; all Interpreters, I say, agree, that what is said from the Seventh to the Thirteenth Verse, in answer to the First Objection, is not to be understood of St. *Paul's* own Person, as a Christian; even those, I say, who interpret the Fourteenth Verse, and all that follows of St. *Paul* a Christian, do generally confess, that in the Seven foregoing Verses, he speaks in the Person of a Carnal *Jew*, under Conviction of Sin and Guilt by the Law of *Moses*, but not reform'd by it; and indeed the ground and occasion of them, will not permit us to understand them of any other: Yea, that which doth follow in the Fourteenth Verse, where 'tis said

said in part of an answer to the Second Objection³. We know *that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal and sold under sin*, is both by Calvin and Beza too, interpreted of an Unregenerate Jew; for though some tell us, that the Apostle there begins to speak of himself, when a Regenerate Christian (as if it were a Sufficient sign of Regeneration, for a Man to acknowledge the *law to be Spiritual, though he himself continue carnal and a slave to sin*) yet neither Calvin nor Beza do allow of this; for they begin at the Fifteenth Verse, to interpret the Apostle's words of St. Paul himself when Regenerate, acknowledging not only all that was said in answer to the First Objection, from Verse the 7th to the 13th, but that which follows from the 13th to the 15th, in part of answer to the Second Objection, to be likewise meant of an Unregenerate Jew, under conviction by the Law of Moses; and the Truth is, he that well considers how both these Objections, and the Answers to them, do all depend on the 5th Verse, which expressly speaks of the Carnal State of the Jews under the Law of Moses, when they were in the Flesh, will be hard put to it, to give any tolerable account, why the latter part of the Chapter, from the Fourteenth Verse to the end, should not be meant of the same State of Carnality and Sin, as well as that which goes before in answer to the First Objection; That which induces some to think otherwise, is a mistake concerning the meaning of some particular Phrases, wherein the Person afterward describ'd is brought in, declaring his consent to the goodness of the Law, and approbation of it, and the like; but he that picks out some particular Sentences, not considering the Context which is joyn'd with them, nor their dependance on what goes before, nor the reason or occasion on which they were spoken, cannot possibly be any good interpreter of the Scripture.

Since therefore all the goodness here describ'd, was intended only for a justification of the Law, and not any Commendation of the Person who brake it: And since the whole Discourse in question, was occasioned by what was said, *v. 5.* of the State of the

the *Jews* under the Law, when they were in the Flesh, I may safely conclude, that the Apostle is afterwards to be understood, as speaking still of the same State of Carnality and Misery which occasion'd his Discourse, and not of the State of a Regenerate Christian from it, by the *law of the spirit of life*; for when the occasion of his discourse led him to speak of the condition of a Carnal *Jew* under the Law of *Moses*, and there was no other occasion at all to divert him from it (as 'tis also evident there was not) we cannot reasonably suppose him to desert his Subject, and fall into another, which was not only impertinent, but contrary to his purpose, as was shewn in the former Argument.

From the first and remote occasion, let us pass to the next and immediate occasion of the words in question, for this also is very serviceable to my present purpose, which is to shew, that they are not to be understood of St. *Paul's* own Person, when a Regenerate Christian. But I must take notice, that they who think otherwise are divided among themselves, concerning the Apostle's transition from his Discourse of a Carnal *Jew*; for some think he begins at the Fourteenth Verse, others think he begins at the Fifteenth to speak of himself when a Regenerate Christian, all agree, that he speaks of a Carnal *Jew* under convictions from the Law of *Moses*, until he comes to one of those Verses. From which concession, together with the immediate connexion of the words,

1st. I thus argue against the First of those Opinions, That 'tis unreasonable to think, that the Apostle, Verse Fourteen, should speak of himself as a Regenerate Christian, because those words are evidently a reason of what was said before of a Carnal *Jew*, this appears by the Rational Particle *for*, in the beginning of the Verse; which runneth thus, *for we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin*; where the causal Conjunction *for*, manifestly shews, that those words are a Reason of what goes before: Since therefore 'tis acknowledged on both sides, that the Apostle in
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the former Verses speaks of the State of a Carnal Jew under the Law of *Moses*, how can we imagine, that in this which is added as a reason of the former, he should speak of a Regenerate Christian? Must not the Reason of an Affirmation, be understood in the same Sense, and have respect to the same Case, as the words whereof 'tis a Reason? Certainly no Reason can question this; Since therefore in the Thirteenth Verse, that Apostle vindicates the law from being the Cause of Death, unto a Carnal Jew who lay under Conviction, or the Sense of Guilt and Condemnation by it, we must needs understand the following words of the same Case, because they are brought in as a Reason of what was said before. For the clearing whereof, we are to consider,

1st, What it was which the Apostle had to prove.

2dly, The Reason or Argument by which he proves it.

As for the First of these, 'tis manifest that his business was to prove, that it was not *the law*, but *sin*, which was the cause of Death and Condemnation to a Carnal Jew; not the *Law*, which was good, but *sin worketh death by that which was good*, saith the Apostle, in answer to the Objection, Verse Thirteen. Why so: how proves he this? The next Words are the Reason of both; *for we know*, saith he, *that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal*, &c. First, *The law is spiritual*, requiring nothing but what is just and right, consonant and agreeable to the Spirit, Mind, or Rational Soul of Man: For that this is the meaning of *Spiritual* in this place, appears not only from its opposition to Carnal, but most plainly from the following Verses, wherein the Apostle confirms what he says in this, still proving the Goodness and Spirituality of the Law, by the acknowledgment and confession of a Man's own Mind and Conscience, even when he breaks it; as if he had said, *we know that the law is spiritual, holy, just and good*, for my own Conscience testifies as much; when ever I do evil, it checks and reproves me for my Transgression, and in so doing, con-

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sents unto the law, that 'tis good, Verse Sixteen, which confirms the first part of the Apostle's answer to the Objection, *Verse Thirteen, viz. That notwithstanding any thing he had said of the Guilt and Misery of a Person under the Law, yet still the law it self was innocent and good.* It follows secondly, *but I am carnal, and sold under sin,* That is, Carnally Minded, and enslaved unto sinful Lusts; this proves the other part of his Answer *Verse Twelve, that it was sin which wrought death in him, by the Law which was good; for to be carnally minded is death;* as it follows, *Chap. 8. 6.* It was not therefore the Law of God, but the Carnality of the Man, who brake it, which was properly the Cause of Death; the fault was not in the Law, but in the Person, whose Carnal Mind was enmity against God, *and was not 'subject to the law of God, neither indeed could be,* *Chap. 8. 7.* Thus the Fourteenth Verse, is a plain proof and confirmation of what was said in the former; which obvious and easie Observation, shews, that it is to be understood of the same Person, and of the same state of Death and Misery, as that is, whereof 'tis a Reason. The Causal connexion of the words, and the whole process of the discourse is an evidence hereof; so that did we not suffer our Minds to be diverted from the business, by other impertinent questions, which are very different from these in hand, it were not easie to mistake the meaning and purpose of the Apostle, whose business in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Verses, was to answer an objection, occasioned by what he has said before, of the miserable condition of a Carnal Jew, under the law of *Moses*, when his Mind and Conscience being convicted by the law, served indeed to encrease the sense of his faults and danger, but was unable without the Grace of the Gospel to afford him any relief; for that this might not seem any disparagement to the Law of *Moses*, the Apostle lays the blame where it ought to lie, that is, on the Sinfulness and Carnality of Men, still maintaining the goodness of the Law, not-

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withstanding its weakness to destroy the Dominion of Sin and Death ; because that Weakness arose, not from the Law it self, but from the prevailing *sinfulness of the flesh*, Chap. 8. 3. or because the *Man was carnal, and sold under Sin*, and this is so plain, that 'tis confessed by some, who though they apply the following words to a Regenerate Christian; yet acknowledge, that *to be carnal, and sold under sin*, is the Description of an Unregenerate Jew. But,

2dly, The same answer will serve to confute that Opinion also, for those words in the Fifteenth Verse, are likewise a Reason and Proof of what was said in the Fourteenth, as appears by the Rational Particle *for* in the beginning of that also, *for that which I do, I allow not*. But some may say, How does this prove that which goes before ? That is, how doth the Non-approbation or dislike of the Evil which he did, prove that *the law was Spiritual*, and yet the *Man was carnal, and sold under Sin* ? I answer, That the Words are a clear and evident proof of both : For first, when the Conscience of an Evil Man disallows the Evil which he doeth, he Condemns himself indeed for doing of it, but justifies the Law which he breaks ; his own Mind and Conscience dictating to him, the same which the Law requires, is a plain witness and testimony to the Goodness and Spirituality of it, an evident Confession and Acknowledgment, that the Law is good, even in the Judgment of Reason, which consents unto it, Verse Sixteen.

As this disallowing the Evil which he did, is a proof of the Spirituality and Goodness of the Law, so his doing the Evil which he disallow'd, is an evidence, That the *Man was carnal, and sold under sin* ; for to Sin against his own Conscience, to do the Evil which his Mind and Reason disallow'd, argues him to be carnal indeed, and enslav'd unto Sin, through the Prevalence and Dominion of Carnal Lusts. Thus we see, how the Fifteenth Verse, is a good and plain Proof of that which goes before ; for by disallowing the Evil which he did, he acknowledg'd the *Spirituality of the law*, and consented.

sented to it, that it was good ; and by doing the Evil, which his Conscience disallow'd, he shewed himself to be *carnal and enslav'd to sin*: Those therefore who grant the Fourteenth Verse to be spoken of a Carnal Jew, must be forced to yield the Cause, and grant that the Fifteenth Verse was spoken also of the same, unless they will make the Apostle's Argument, in part at least, invalid and insufficient to prove the thing, for which he useth it; for to do the Evil which a Man disallows, will *not* prove him *to be carnal and sold under sin*, in their Sense, who confess that Expression to signify the state of an Unregenerate Jew, unless it be meant of doing Evil, habitually, frequently, and commonly ; and not of doing it now and then, thro' Infirmity, Inconsiderateness, and sudden Surprizal. 'Tis granted on both sides, that a Regenerate Man, may, thro' forgetfulness, and the common frailty of Humane Nature, be too often overtaken in a Fault, and therefore do the Evil which he disallows ; this therefore will not prove him to be in a State of Carnality, Enslav'd unto Sin, as that signifies a State of Unregeneration. But the doing Evil, whereof we now speak, against the dictates of the Mind and Conscience, disallowing of it, is brought in as a Reason and Proof of the Carnality and Bondage unto Sin, mention'd in the former Verse. And therefore if that be meant of a Carnal and Unregenerate Jew, this must needs be meant of the same ; for otherwise, the Apostle's Reason would be no Reason, that is, no Argument or Proof at all, of the thing he design'd to prove by it. But here I argue from their Confession, who grant, *that to be carnal, and sold under Sin*, is the Description of an Unregenerate Jew ; for allowing this, it will unavoidably follow, that his doing the Evil which he disallow'd, must be meant of the same, because 'tis added as a Reason or Proof of his Carnality and Bondage under Sin ; so that upon this supposition, the Fifteenth Verse must needs be meant of an Unregenerate Person, as well as the former.

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And thus I have also finish'd the other part of my Argument from the occasion of the words in question, which is taken from the next immediate occasion and connexion of them; for begin where you will, (either at the Fourteenth Verse with some, or at the Fifteenth Verse with others) and apply them to a Regenerate Christian, and you may easily perceive how you wander from the intent and meaning of them, which was to confirm and prove what was said of the Goodness of the Law, together with the Sinfulness and Misery of a Man under it, when his Mind enlightned and convinced by the Law, served indeed to encrease the sense of his Danger, but was not able to afford relief, without the Grace of Christ proclaim'd in the Gospel.

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